The Tradition of
Sepulchral Temples in South India

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by

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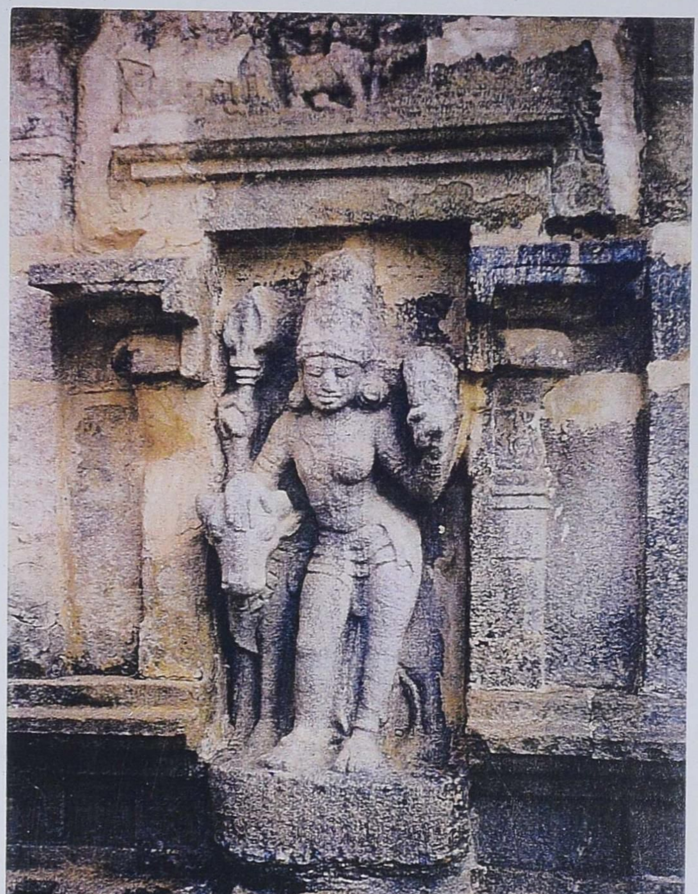

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PREFACE

The idea of tracing the origin and development of the tradition of the sepulchral temples in south India came to me long back when I first saw the *'Cholisvaram'* temple at Melpadi which belongs to that type. The beauty and workmanship are splendid and made me to wonder the affection and respect of the kith and kin on the deceased king. The Nehru Trust gave me the chance to work on the topic and I am happy that my long-term dream came true. Only in the recent past scholars are showing much attention on the graveyard subjects and the informations are awaiting to be interlinked. The megalithic burials, the primitive temples and the hero stones are related to this subject, but not much importance given to this subject, may be due to the availability of limited evidences. The sincere effort of mine may please be encouraged by the critics to correct myself in future.

The sepulchral temples came into existence in a full-fledged form in south India during the reign of the Cholas only. We could not get any structural evidence of this type belonging to the pallava period. Comparatively less references were available for the Kerala temples and we do not find any standing ancient temple of this type in that region. All these, does not mean that the tradition of erecting memorial temples were not in practice with those kings or the people. The influence might have been less or the natural calamities could have erased the evidence. The domination of pasupatha sect of Saivism played a major role in the tradition of erecting memorial temples in south India; wherever we find a temple of this kind there we find the reference of the pasupathas without fail. This leads us to trace the philosophy of this cult and correlate it with our subject. Still more details to be analysed and researched regarding the subject, which will be an elaborated, work in future. This is the primary work done on the subject.

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K.Moortheeswari.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The temple is the abode of God and meant for worship. As a religious institution and place of worship, the temple of South India has had a peculiar past. K.R.Srinivasan, in his ***'Temples of South India'***, states that the structure that enshrines a god or some other object of veneration circumambulation adoration and worship, it has had a varied growth in different parts of the sub continent. This was according to the local needs and creedal requirements and subject, of course to the interplay or exchange of thoughts and ideas. The rise of the protestant cults of Jainism and Buddhism during the pre Christian epoch and the development of their own version of the legends, creeds, forms of deities, rituals and the like resulted in their adaptation of one kind or another of the temple form and its adjuncts as suited the object of their particular worship and its glorification, for essentially the temple in its form and layout depended on the object of veneration installed and the method adopted for its worship.

The Temple was the most beneficent institution of medieval India and its activities touched the life of the people at many points, enriching and ennobling their lives. Hindu people feel that god resides in the temple, though he is trusted to be everywhere. They also believe in the life after death, and the deification of their ancestors after death. They constructed temples for the gods as well as for their deceased ancestors. The temples constructed for the dead are called as sepulchral temples or memorial temples, in general. The sepulchral temples are called as '***pallipadai***' in south India, which means the place where the deceased soul rests. Pallipadai (tomb-type) temples are the temples raised over the mortal remains of the dead kings at the burial place. Though the majority is generally for the kings, occasionally they were built for the queens, chieftains, and also for the saints. If we go deep into the available sources of archaeology and literature, in South India first the memorials were erected for the religious personalities like Buddha and Jaina ascetics in the name of chaityas, stupas, bastis etc, though we have the literary references in '***Mahabharatha***', and '***Ramayana***', no authentic existence of the '***Chaityas***' of Hindu origin. Later on when the erection of temples came into practice and temple art started flourishing; the erection of memorial temples also contemporarily came into practice. The sepulchral temples were erected with equal consideration with the construction of temples for the gods. For some of the kings, queens and other royal personalities, temples were raised on their mortal remains. But all these memorial temples were '***Śivalayas***' and constructed on the burial sites of

the deceased persons who had been obtained '*Śiva diksha*' during their lifetime.

It is to be noted that the memorial temples were not raised for all the kings or queens, after their death. There must have been some criteria for getting this honour or whatsoever after the demise, like the '*Śiva diksha*' or pre-mature death etc. Religiously important personalities were respected as gods and after their death, temples were raised for their memory and worshipped by the followers. If we see in detail, with the inscriptional as well as the literary evidences, it will be convincing that the memorial '*Śivalayas*' were raised for the personalities who have got '*Śiva diksha*' and died prematurely. The salvation of the souls and attaining the feet of lord Śiva after leaving this world, will be possible only by performing some specific rituals, according to the saivism. The Pāsupathā saivism preached that god Śiva himself will enter into the body of the dead person and give his soul the salvation. So it is not a wonder that all the memorial Śivalayas were administered by the Lakulísa pandithas of the pāsupathā sect. The memorial temples of South India, are belonged to the period during which the Saivism, especially the Pāsupathā cult was popular and dominating.

In South India, we come across this type of temples many in number. At B.N. Jalehallu in Karnātakā state (near Badami) we find memorial temples eleven in numbers in memory of the Chālukyā Vikramaditya II, his two queens Lokamadevi and Trilokyamahadevi, and also for the royal personalities. The Dadigesvara temple at Kodihalli, Mandya district of Karnātakā state, where ruins of a brick temple were noticed, belongs to this class. As its name suggests, it is believed to be raised in memory of one of the founders of the Gangā dynasty i.e. Dadiga, brother of Madhava I. We learn from the inscription a temple called Vinitesvara after Avinita, a Nitimargesvara after Nitimarga-I, and Śivamaresvara after Śivamara - II, who were all the Gangā kings, were raised and grants were made by the successor kings for their regular maintenance and up keep, in the Karnātakā region.

In Āndhrapradesh state, there is a temple called '***Kodanda Ramesvaram*** alias ***Adityeswaram***' at Tondaimanadu, near Kalahasthi, built by Paranthaka Chola - I, in memory of his father Aditya Chola on the mortal remains of the latter. At Alampur of the same state, we can see a temple called '***Svarga Bramha***' which was raised in memory of the queen of Chālukyā Vinayaditya.

In Tamil Nadu state, a memorial temple called, '***Arinjigaiesvaram***' was raised by Rājarāja- I in memory of his grandfather Arinjigai or

Arinjaya Chola on the mortal remains of the latter. A memorial temple was raised for Sundarapandiyan with the name of '*Sundara Pandiya Esvaram*' at the village Pallimadam near Aruppukkottai, in the same state, by his younger brother Virapandyan, the pandya ruler. A memorial temple was raised in the name of the Chula queen Panchavan madevi, wife of Rājarajā-I the famous Chula ruler, at Pattesvaram near Dharasuram in the same state, with the name of pallippadai panchavan madevi esvaram (presently named as Ramanathan koil).

In addition to these existing temples we come across plenty of epigraphical evidences about many other temples of this kind. For example, at a place called Bramhadesam in the present North Arcot district, of Tamil Nadu state, we got the inscriptional reference about the death of the Chola king Rajendra-I, and his queen and also a mention about the construction of a Śiva temple on the mortal remains of them. Also a water tank was made to satisfy the thirst of the deceased, by their beloved son Rajadirajan. Another inscription says that there are five memorial temples were raised for the Chola King Rājarāja -II, and his four queens who committed '*sati*', i.e. sacrificed their lives immediately after their husband's death. The temple raised for Rājarāja-II, was called as '***Pallippadai Raja Gambira Esvaramudaiyar*** in the inscriptions. There are inscriptional evidences for a memorial temple of Vikrama Chola, named as '***Pallippadai Vikrama Chola Chadurvedi Mangalam***' at a place Thiruneelakkudi near Kumbakonam in Tamilnadu state. At a village called Solapuram near Vellore, in North Arcot district, Tamilnadu state, there is an inscription found near a Śiva temple revealed that a Gangā chief named Rajadityā built a temple for Śiva and a tomb for his deceased father Prithvi Gangarayar in the eighth regnal year of King Vijaya kampa varman. Though there is no trace of these temples, the inscriptions confirm the then existence of the temples. We can go on adding informations like this.

All these existing and non-existing temples help us to know about the practice of erecting sepulchral temples in south India. And the inscriptions help us to know much about the tradition of the sepulchral temples in south India. As per the available sources all the memorial temples are Śiva temples and Saiva Lakulísa pandithas were appointed to look after the administration. Though there is always another Śiva temple nearby to the sepulchral temple, separate arrangements were made for the maintenance of the sepulchral temples by appointing the Lakulísa panditas is a point to be reaserched. It create a doubt that they construct a temple to the dead, but treated it with some special rules and rites, may be according to the Āgamās. It is clearly said in the Saiva Āgamās, the

'*samadhi*' or memorial is to be built near a Śiva temple or near a river. It may be because the Śiva temples are already in the or near the burial grounds even before the time of the Āgamās. We still find the memorial temples near a Śiva temple or near a river, and still the cremation are burials are performed near the rivers or some other water sources. Otherwise the family heirs take the cremated ashes to the holy rivers. All these matters should be deeply analysed to figure out the tradition of sepulchral temples in south India.

We find the same culture in the south East Asian countries, which is called, '***Deva raja cult***' i.e., kings becoming god after demise. The biggest temple complex, '***Anghor vat***' in Combodia is believed to be one of this kind. This temple is a Vishnu temple. But in south India we find memorial shrines for the saivists only, except the few examples like the shrine of the Vaishnava saint Ramanuja, in the famous Ranganatha temple at Srirangam in Tamil nadu state.

Almost in all the sepulchral temples of south India the administration was in the hands of the Lakulísa pandithas the followers of the pāsupathā sect of saivism. So to know the reason, tradition and practice of the tradition of sepulchral temples we have to refer the Saiva religion, especially the pāsupathā sect. The preaching and principles, the belief introduced by the sect, the practice followed by the priests, the merit and domination of the religion during the time of the erection of the memorial '***Śivalayas***' and the patronage of the rulers are to be studied closely.

For example the tradition of erecting memorials started with the memorials for the religious personalities and later on to war heroes, and then to the wives of the heroes who committed '***sati***', after their husbands' demise and for the persons who were good to the mankind and at last completed the cycle with the present practice of erecting memorial shrines only for the religious heads in their respective mutts. For individuals the custom of erecting memorials is fading away due to the practical inconvenience of finding place, time and finance. The lack of religious faith also may be one of the reason.

When the temple architecture started flourishing, the builders or the craftsmen the stapati's and the silpins- who belonged to the same guild of artisans had common principals and set methods of design and construction and they worked in collaboration with the priesthood that knew the rituals, the nature of the objects of veneration and the modes of their worship. They together determined the forms of the temples with

such modifications as suited the respective cases, as also the fixation of the features of the principal deities and the decorations of the structure with alone and other sculptural embellishments. As a result , the vastu, silpa, and Āgamā texts and canons as described in the sastras were evolved. All that was known and necessary in the creation of the temple and the conduct of worship there in was codified. Like the Saiva Āgamās for the temples in general, there are other specific Āgamās like Rauravāgamā to deal with the memorial temples. Rauravāgamā deals with '***Kshetra-linga pradhista***' to relieve one from the cycle of births and deaths, especially for the war heroes and the kings. In some texts it is known as '***Samadhi linga stapana***'. A.H. Longhurst, the famous archaeologist has left good notes on such shrines noticed by him in Āndhra Pradesh state.

There was a parallel or earlier cult of erecting memorial shrines other than the '***Śivalayas***'. These type of temples are the temples erected out of fear for the persons who died unexpectedly or by the violence of others. These temples, in due course became the temples of the village guarding gods. So while researching the sepulchral temples of South India we have to study about these temples also. This is a sincere attempt to trace the origin, development, varieties, and existence of the tradition of sepulchral temples in south India with the sources of epigraphy, literature, monuments and also the custom in practice. Though there is no epigraphical support for these temples, they too have the ancient value, which cannot be denied due to their link with the megalithic burials. So we have to start from the megalithic memorials to the developed full pledged temples to achieve our goal in tracing the tradition of the sepulchral temples in south India.

The period extending from the 6th to the 8th centuries A.D. is very significant in the history of the Indian temples. As a result of the keen interest taken and kind patronage given, by the Chālukyās and the Pallava kings, the temple building gained much. The next phase of the temple architecture of the south is connected with the Cholas (9th – 12th centuries A.D) and during their reign the temple architecture reached its zenith. They were supplanted by the pandyas, and they also constructed many magnificent temples in their territory. The period from the 14th to the 16th centuries is known as the Vijayanakara period, and they were famous for the extensions, additions and erecting huge '***Gopuras***' at the main entrances of the temples. In this work, the sepulchral temples belonging to all these prime dynasties of south India are going to be analysed with the help of available sources..

ORIGIN OF SEPULCHRAL TEMPLES IN SOUTH INDIA

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The memorials of dead people could be seen all around the world. It is still a practice with the people, though they belong to various religions. It shows their respect to their ancestors, their admiration towards the heroic qualities of the deceased person. The erection of memorials to dead people is not a new practice. It is an ancient and worldwide phenomenon. The memorials took different forms in different countries and times. In south India the erection of memorials started from the Stone Age. Though the purpose in the beginning is not clear, the scholars assume that there were many other reasons for the erection of memorials, than the respect to the ancestors. Ancestral worship may be one of the cause for the erection of memorials, but also they were erected out of fear. The people were afraid of the dead. They believed in evil spirits of the dead, and to appease the evil spirits they have erected memorials like stone circles. They thought that the evil spirits had to be given regular offerings and worshipped periodically.

The gods and the goddesses of the original inhabitants of southern India had no temples. The developments of the temples are from the graves of the departed heroes and chiefs belonging to the pre historic times. The megalithic remains of the Pre-historic period are mostly sepulchral and, in order to understand their true value in connection with our present purpose, some knowledge of the manners and customs of the people who built them is necessary before we proceed further.

In pre-historic India, as in modern India, various methods for the disposal of the dead were adopted. The men of Paleolithic times probably abandoned their dead in the forest, as the oritae of gedrosia (makran) continued to do in the days of Alexander the great. In the Neolithic age burial was probably the rule, and it seems certain that the practice of burial is older than that of cremation. Megalithic tombs in great variety of form are found in Deccan and southern India. They have sometimes been found to contain both stone and iron implements. This cult of the dead led to the custom of depositing in the tomb the weapons and implements, tenement and gear, enjoyed in life, as the dead were supposed to require the same kind of food and equipment as when living, and to modest the survivors unless they obtained it. Those who caused sorrow and trouble in life were after death supposed to be the cause of further unhappiness, and as such they had to be propitiated with gifts that they would have appreciated when alive. They had to be supplied with the weapons, the cooking pots, the water jars, the ornaments, and the implements, which they used during life. Periodically solemn festivals were held, and a

portion of the viands was solemnly set apart for the departed. This feeling of awe in which the spirit of the dead was held, led to the custom of providing a material abode for the soul or ghost. The survivors believing that the ghostly ogre, being so well provided for, would abstain from haunting or molesting them.

From the style of the construction of these sepulchral monuments and the nature of the contents discovered in them, it is clear that in ancient India, ancestor-worship, or more broadly, the cult of the dead, played an important role in the life-style of the original inhabitants in early times.

From the third century BC onwards the motive behind the erection of memorials and its transformation could be analysed with archaeological evidence. The gradual transformation of the megalithic cult into the hero cult happened due to the changes in the contemporary society. People started to erect '***hero stones***' for the heroes, '***sati***' stones for the women who committed suicide for the death of their husbands etc. It means at the early stage the memorial stone circles on the burial sites were common to all due to the faith of the evil sprits and also the fear. But in due course this tradition stayed with the tribal and the civilised people started erecting memorials for their beloved, and to the noble persons for great reasons. The tradition of honouring the ancestors and helping their souls to reach heaven the successors started erecting sepulchral shrines and arranged for regular worship and also for other formalities like food offerings to the devotees etc. The cult of erecting hero stones was also in practice side by side, when there were temples erected on the burial sites of the kings, queens, chieftains, saints and notables. The hero stones or the inscribed stones with bas-relief figures of the heroes got another form by having supporting stone slabs at both the sides and the top. These type chambers are called as chamber temples or soul houses.

The beginning of South Indian sepulchral monuments could be attributed to the '***Chaityas***' of the Buddhist religion. But actually the name chaitya itself borrowed from the Hindu origin. In past the most general name for a sanctuary is '***chaitya***', a term not only applying to buildings, but to sacred trees, memorial stones, holy spots, images and religions inscriptions. Hence all edifices having the character of a sacred monument are chaityas, but not all the chaityas are edifices. Both the epics, '***Ramayana***' and '***Mahabharatha***' mention chaityas in several places. The Mahabharatha gives us some idea of what may be regarded as the earliest history of the chaitya. According to

Bk.XII.69.41.& c., "gods, yakshas, rakshashas, nagas, pisasas, serpants, gandarvas, apsarasas and cruel bhutas dwell in the chaityas".

The word chaitya is derived from chiti or funeral pyre. Readers may doubt that what then the tree to do with '***chiti***' or the funeral pyre and from which the word chaitya is derived?. The clue is suggested with the Mahabharatha, XIII,141.18: The crematorium is said to be generally shaded by the branches of the banyan tree. In Bk. IV, cemetery outside the capital of king Virata is called '***pitrivana***' or the grove of the fathers. Therefore, the chief characteristic of the cemetery in the Mahabharatha appears to be the presence of big trees. Their presence in the crematorium can be accounted for by assuming that people were accustomed to plant them on the graves.

The Ramayana represented a later stage in the development of the chaitya. Here is no longer a tree, but a shrine or a temple. The Ramayana refers to a chaitya, in the crematorium as '***smasana chaitya pratima bhushito pi bhayakarah***'(Sundarakanda.ch.22:29) . After that the Buddhists borrowed the name chaitya for their worship places where they kept the relics of Buddha, and the '***Stupas***' of the Buddhist religion were also the same. In the pre Buddhists days, a stupa was a funeral mound and afterwards it symbolized the '***mahaparinirvana***' of Gautama, the Buddha. These are said to be of different kinds. The saririka (arporeal) the stupas, were meant to enshrine the relics of a king, or of an outstanding teacher, or of the Buddha.

The stupas seem to have had their beginning to the burial mounds. In '***Dharmasastra***' the satapatha brahmana refers to the kinds of smasanas (burial mounds), the four cornered and the circular. (Kane : history of dharmasastra IV) (The '***Mattika thumpam***' in the jatakas stands for the same earthen mounds.) V.S.Agrawal has cited many references to the conception of stupas in the Rigveda. That the practice or building stupas on the bodily relics of important personalities was in vogue, and it is known from the '***Mahaparinibbana sutta***', where in the Buddha is recorded to have told his favorite disciple, Ananda, that after his dead enshrining his bodily relics, should be contracted at the crossing of four roads, in the same way as was done in the case of a universal monarch, he also referred to the merits earned by placing a garland or perfume, or by making salutations or paying respects to a stupa. The Jainas erected such memorials also. It is thus clear that originally the stupas were made for secular as well as religions personalities

In the '*Mahavamsa*', king Ajaksatara is said to have built '*Dhatuchaityas*', i.e. chaityas or stupas, erected over the bodily relics of the lord Buddha all round his capital. Asoka, the great mauryan ruler is known to have opened the original eight stupas. According to the tradition the relics of the lord were divided into eight shares and accordingly eight original stupas were constructed. Stupas constructed over the bodily relics of the master are known as '*dhatu chaitya*'. The important examples of stupas in the south come from Goti, Amaravati, Bhattiprolu, Jaggayyapeta, Vthankasala and Nagarjunakunda.

Critical observers, like the late sir Alfred c laya lll, attest innumerable examples of the gradual elevations into gods of human beings, the process even beginning during their lifetime. A man wins local fame as an ascetic with abnormal powers, or a wife, because Alcestis-like she sacrificed herself for her husband and immolated herself on his pyre. Miracles occur at their shrines, and the surviving relations who guard them wax rich off the offerings brought. In the course of a few years as the recollection of the man's personality becomes misty, his origin grows mysterious, his career takes a legendary hue, his birth and death were both supernatural; in the next generation the names of the elder gods get introduced into the story and so the marvelous tradition works itself into a myth, until nothing but a personal incarnation can account for which a series of prodigies. This man was an avatar of Vishnu or Śiva; his supreme apotheosis is now complete and the Brahmans feel warranted in providing for him a niche in the orthodox pantheon. No doubt these departed warriors now under consideration, were elevated to the rank of demi-gods in much the same manner as that cited above. Sculptured dolmens of this class and period are also common in the Nilgiri district and no doubt their origin and history are much the same in both cases. At Kambaduru, a village on the southern frontier of the Kalyandrug taluk, Andrapradesh state, and 18 miles from the town of that name, there are three very interesting old dolmens, which have been set up as Śiva shrines.

The sincere and hard works with involvement of the archaeologists have brought to light thousands of graves, which is scattered all over South India and the Deccan. They belong to different ages. The earliest of them go back to the Stone Age; and the latest belongs to the 15th and 16th centuries of the Christian era. They are classified by specialists into a number of types, each of which is sharpely distinguished from the others by special peculiarities of construction. The most primitive of them is, perhaps, the simple ring of stone, with three stones in the center, marking the dead body lies buried. There are hundreds of these stone

circles at Amaravathi in the Krishna district of Andrapradesh, and archaeologists are of opinion that the place marks the site of the burial ground of some ancient city.

The circle of stones, or more generally the cairn has attracted much attention. There are many theories which propose to explain its meaning. Mr.Longhurst's theory has an exclusive reference to the circle surrounding Cairns. He is of opinion that the stone circles appear to be only intended as retaining walls for the earth and stones, which were heaped over the stone sepulcher in the middle. Mr. William Crooke suggests another hypothesis in his book '***Things Indians***'. He says, " the circle was probably intended as '***ghost- hedge***', to restrain the spirit within these assigned limits, or a sign that the site was taboo". This appears to be true. The burial- ground is generally regarded as an impure place. Anyone who enters it is polluted, and he requires to be purified. What is true of the burial- ground is equally true of individual graves. We find it recorded in the Rig- Veda that the Aryans considered the burial- ground as taboo. R.V.X.18 says:-

> ***"I place this barrier (of stones) on this account that no one may go beyond it".***

More generally, however, primitive people are afraid of the spirits of the dead. It is a common belief among them that the ghosts of the dead are unhappy, and they wreack vengeance upon the living, if they neglect them after death. They are said to be the causes of epidemics and famines. It is, therefore, necessary to propitiate them, and buy them off, by means of gifts. It is from such beliefs as have been described above that the extensive practice of worshipping the spirits of the dead arose. We can argue that the true religion of the masses in south India is based upon the fear of demons with which their minds are filled.

So to trace the origin of the sepulchral temples in south India, we have to travel into two different routes separately without getting confused. One is the memorial temple dedicated to the dead out of fear, which are still existing in the rural areas of the southern India, and the other is the type of temples raised according to the ***Saiva Āgamās*** during the historical period.

PRIMITIVE TEMPLES

THE PRIMITIVE TEMPLE

We have already seen that there was a cult of erecting memorial temples for the people died of the violence of others, or died prematurely due to some other reasons. The evolution of gods from human beings appears to be an old process. Though the practice is an old one, it is still alive with the tribes of South India. The Todas of Nilgiris, bury the skull bone of the dead man in a corner of the burial place called Āzāram, and put a block of stone over the spot. The Toda Āzārams appears to be a link connecting the simple circles of stones with the Cairns. There are another group of tribes called Kurumbas, in the same area. The temple of them are more identical with the Āzārams of the Todas in appearence.The Irulas, another tribe dwelling on the slopes of the hills, make use of stone circles, as temples.

The primitive stone circles that were originally built around the graves to prevent the ghosts from going abroad and doing mischief, were transformed in course of time, into the shrines of the gods whom the people worshipped. In order to appease the wrath of the ghosts, people used to offer them gifts of various kinds on certain days. This resulted in the development of a cult around the graves, which consequently became objects of popular worship. The practice of worshipping the graves continued even after the method of constructing the graves underwent a change. The simple stone circles yielded place to more complex and elaborate. Barrows and Cairns took place of the stone -circle. It is possible that the Cairns and other elaborate tombs had their origin in the primitive habit of abandoning a house where a death had taken place after burying the corpse in it. Traces of this custom are seen in the funeral rites of the Todas. The body of a dead Toda is invariably placed in a '*funeral hut*', which is generally built for the occasion. All the funeral huts unless they happen to be the dairies, are either abandoned or burnt down.

The cairn builder was a firm believer in after-life. Some of the funeral monuments are still worshipped by the people in certain places. Metz, stated that the Kurumbas are regularly worshipping a cairn. The Malai - Arians of Travancore, according to Walhouse," make miniature cromlechs of small slabs of stone and place within them a long pebble to represent the dead" which is supposed to mean the miniature cromlech. The kurumbas and the Malai-Aryans are not the only people who worship the Cairns and the cromlechs. The other tribal communities dwelling on the Nilgiri hills do the same. reeks stated about the Kurumba temple, which is a memorial place. This is possible. In this case, the structure that

was originally worshipped as a sepulcher is divorced from its original purpose and put to a novel use. The grave is thus transformed into a temple, although the atmosphere of the graveyard still clings to it. The shrine of the Kurumba god is connected with their dead heroes is corroborated by the nature of the god himself. He is called *'Bira- Devar'*, which means a hero god.

Buchanan says," that those men who die without having been married become Virikas to whose images, as a great annual feast which is celebrated on purpose. If this feast be omitted, the Virikas become enraged, occasion sickness, kill the sheep and alarm the people by horrid dreams. .They are only to be appeased by the celebration of the proper feast."

Kanaka-durgamma, the goddess presiding over the destinies of the town of Vijayawada, of Āndhra state. She is very well known over the whole of the Āndhra country. The origin of the goddess is described as follows; -

"There were seven brahman brothers in a village who had one sister kanakamma. Her conduct filled them with suspicion, and when she heard their state of mind, she drowned herself in a well. The people of the village started to believe the story that kanakamma had become a sakti and entered the hills. The story that kanakamma had become a goddess was not so easily stopped. When the body was taken from the well and buried, the people began to worship her at that place, and soon built her a temple."

Another village deity, Lingamma has the following story associated with her origin: "In Mupparazuvaripalem, Darsi taluk, Nellore district, lived a woman called Lingamma. She was of the sudhra caste, but she and her husband were poor, and worked in the house of a rich man who belonged to their own caste. A theft had taken place in her employer's house and suspicion pointed to Lingamma, her employer made her much trouble, and was about take legal proceedings against her, when she ended the matter by jumping into the well and drowning herself.

A few days after this tragic death, troubles began to come to the household of her employer. A little later Lingamma appeared to him twice in a dream, and told him that because of his cruelty, she was bringing these troubles upon him. She also threatened him with worse disasters, if he did not institute a proper worship for her. His response

evidently was not satisfactory, for Lingamma immediately brought a scourge of choleara upon the village, and appeared to many as a devil. All were now thoroughly frightened, and led by Lingamma's former employer, they built temple of some importance and prepared an image of both Lingamma and her husband, and instituted the worship already described.

The story of Podilamma, the tutelary goddess of the village of Podili in the Nellore district runs as follows:- Some sudhra farmers lived in a hamlet at some distance from the present village of podili. One day they were treading out the grain with the oxen in a distant field. Their sister was to bring them the mid day meal. On the way in a lonely place, she met a man. She put down her basket, and was late in arriving with food. When she arrived her brothers caught her and threw her under the feet of oxen , for they had been watching her while she came and believed her to be guilty.
The girl, evidently killed, disappeared under the feet of the cattle among the sheaves. Later when they removed the straw to winnow the grain, they did not find the body , but found a stone. A man standing near became possessed with the spirit of the girl, and she spoke through him. She said that she had been killed unjustly, and that they must worship her, or great evils would follow. All the people who heard this were terrified and placing the stone in a desirable place, they began its worship" the fame of Podilamma increased, and she became the goddess presiding over the village of Podili. The history of a host of other village deities such as Buchamma, Lodathamma, Gonti is similar.

The evolution of god from human beings appears to be an old process. The poet srinatha who lived in the fourteenth century makes the following observation regarding the religion of palnad:-" The heroes are the divine lingas; chenna is Vishnu. On enquiry Kalabhairava is found to be Kallu Poturaju; Ankamma the shakti is Annapurani."

These instances are sufficient to illustrate the point. The tendency to identify the spirits of those who died under exceptional circumstances with the village deities is common. The conclusion that gods of the dravidians are almost universally human begins returned to earth appears to be just. However, anyone drawing such a conclusion yields to a great temptation.

It is not true that the dravidian gods are always human beings returned to earth. The great '***shaktis***' in whom almost every Hindu in South India believes are certainly not human beings returned to earth.

This is shown by the presence, in a number of villages of gramadevatas who have altogether no connection with the dead. In these villages the '***gramadevata***' is simply called uramma or the village mother. There are no legends connected with her except that she is one of the seven sisters and a wife of Śiva. No doubt, the spirits of a certain class of the dead are identified with the village deities. That does not mean that the saktis themselves had a human origin. The truth is that the divine aspect of a dead person becomes on with the saktis; hence the identification. We cannot understand this clearly unless we forget all the advanced ideas which we associate with our notions of the deity. It is not at all necessary that a god or goddess should be only good.

The dravidian deities are not particular about the ethical distinction between good and evil it is the idea of power that is emphasized in them. They are the embodiments of power. They may be good or they may be evil. It is not due to their love of wickedness that they act in this fashion, but to the desire to exhibit their power. It is the only way in which men can understand and respect power no amount of good can convince men that the gods are powerful and strong . It is necessary that men should understand that the gods are powerful enough to harm them, and strong enough to protect them. This view is further strengthened by the following consideration. The word which signifies a devil in telugu is '***deyyamu***'. The same word is employed to signify god also, with a slight corruption, '***deyyvamu***'. The primitive Āndhras, therefore, could not have distinguished the god from the devil. What they could understand and appreciate was power. Therefore they called every supernatural being dayyamu, irrespective of all ethical considerations.

The '***Depavali***', is celebrated with great enthusiasm in the south. The new year of Gujaratis, and Marwadis begin with that amavasya. At one time, Depavali must have been especially sacred to the ancient spirits. In the Tamil country all the non-brahmans fast and worship the ancestors on that day. The preceding day, the fourteenth day of the black fortnight is called '***Naraka-chaturdasi***' or the fourteenth day of hell. Crackers are fired to scare away the evil spirits. The Depavali therefore seems to be an '***all souls day***'.

The worship of ancestral spirits is closely associated with the worship of the deities of vegetation. The kedaresvara-vrata is performed on the day succeeding the Depavali. Kedaresvara is the lord of the fields and his worship usually takes place in the midst of paddy fields. In Tamilnadu, the non- brahmins, celebrate the first day of the seeding the earth, in the month of '***Aadi***' and in the same month they submit their

offerings like dress, food etc to their ancestors. This proves that they believe the ancestral sprits will guard their vegetation and help for good yield, if they are satisfied perfectly.

The pongal is mainly a feast celebrated in honour of the goddess of vegetation '***gauri***'. Her worship continues for one week in the month of '***pushya***' in the telugu year, and it used to terminate at one time with the pongal; for the last day of the feast is still called '***Yugadi panduga***' the new year feast. On this day all the Āndhras with the exception of the brahmans fast and worship the ancestors.

Now, the worship of two sets of deities at the same time leads naturally to a combination of the two cults. Their attributes and qualities become interchangeable. The temple which originally belonged to the spirits of the dead has been thus transferred to the village deities. This fact is clearly shown by the legends and rites associated with the village deities and the presence of their temples in the '***smasanas***'.

Another shakti, Ankalamma, lives within the precincts of the smasana. At malayanur, a ceremony called '***mayana (smasana)- kollai***' (looting the burning ground) is performed. The village of Malaynur is famous for its Ankalamman temple, and during the festival which takes place immediately after '***Mahāsivaratri***', some thousands of people congregate at the temple, which is near the cremation ground.

Another goddess who bears distinct marks of her residence in the '***samsana***' is Muttyalamma or the pearl - like mother, we have a picture of this deity on 225 of the south Indian images of gods and goddesses of H.Krishna sastri. She is here seated crossing her left leg and extending the right below, so that her right foot may rest upon the chest of a dead body. She wears many ornaments, the most significant of which is the necklace of skulls. The corpse and the necklace point to her usual place of habitation.

Literature bears ample testimony to the existence of temples of '***kali***' or '***durga***' in the '***smasana***'. The '***Katha sarit sagara***' of somadeva contains a description of a temple of durga at Benares. The temple was suited outside the town. There was a smasana in its neighborhood. People could see the burning pyres from the temple as Govindasvami and his son Vijayadatta had done.

The poet Bhavabhuti also describes a temple of durga situated in a smasana in his '***Malati madhava***'. The heroine Malati is led to the temple

of Chamunda to be sacrificed. The temple is situated in the burning ground. The hero Madhava, goes there to secure human flesh which he requires in performing some tantric rites; and finding his beloved bound and ready to be offered as a sacrifice, rescues her.

We have another description of Kali's temple in a smasana, in the Tamil epic '***Manimekhalai***'. Here is the description of the burning ground. The burning ground which was adjacent to the grove was as old as the city itself. It was surrounded by a high wall. Which had four main gates in it. The gate which had the flagstaff was for the '***devas***', who leave the cars standing in mid air looking like painted pictures, and enter through it. Then there is the stately entrance, the sides of which are adorned with beautiful pictures of paddy fields, sugar canes, tanks and groves. The third gate has bare white washed walls, while in the front of the fourth stands the terrible image of a demoness, fiercely frowning and biting her lips and holding the fatal noose and spear in her hands. Soldiers guard this enclosure. It is haunted by devils. Within the walls are seen many strange sights, and terrific sounds are heard here. There you can see the great temple of kali, with the alter in the front yard surrounded by lofty trees which bend down with the weight of the heads of those who have sacrificed themselves to the goddess.

These instances confirm the view that the village deities have borrowed their temples from the ghosts of the cemetery a comparison of the hut urns with the temples of gramadevatas leads us to the same conclusion. The hut urns or urns shaped like hut were used in ancient times for burying the ashes of the dead. A good number of them have been unearthed by archaeologists. They resemble very closely a class of temples dedicated to the village deities. Bruce foote tells us that he saw a very small but typical hut urn in the fields a couple of miles or so to the east of Salem. It was in use as a shrine of some swami, who would in consideration of a lamp burning to his or her hut urn take care of the crops growing in front.

Now, the salem hut urn links the hut shaped temples of village deities with the hut urn properly so called, which takes once again into the precincts of the graveyard. Again, we arrive at the same conclusion when we compare another class of gramadevata shrines with the dolmens, one of the dolmens of the Kambadur group is admirably serves our purpose. The construction of the shrine chamber is similar to the dolmen temples. Only here the shrine chamber has been provided with a hall or mantapa in front connected with the shrine by a small passage; the entire structure being roofed with three roughly hewn flat slabs of granite; the

resemblance between this and the plan of the south Indian temple is generally admitted. Nowhere is this resemblance more striking than in the case of the temples of the village deities. The ground plan and the superstructure are the same in both the cases. The temple of the village deity is generally oblong in form. From outside, it appears as singly hall having no doorway and generally no windows. The roof is a flat terrace, and is not adorned by images. When we enter the temple, however, we find that what appears from outside, as a single hall, is really divided into two chambers, one in front and in another behind it. These two chambers correspond with the mantapam and the shrine of the Kambadur dolmen temple. This type of the temple of the village deity, therefore, must have had its origin in the primitive dolmen.

The transference of rites and ceremonies belonging to the dead to the village deities is nowhere seen more clearly than in the history of the cars. It originally formed part of funeral rites. The custom of building funeral cars survives still among a number of south Indian communities. It appears to be quite popular with the Billavas and the Bants of the west coast. Among the Billavas, the final death ceremonies are performed on the thirteenth day. On the evening of the previous day, at the place where the dead person breathed his last, a small bamboo car, in three tiers, is constructed and decorated with coloured clothes . This car is called '***nirneralu***'. A lamp is suspended from the car, and a cot placed on the ground beneath it, and the jewels and clothes of the dead person are laid thereon. The next day the various articles are collected and tied up in a bundle, which is placed in a palanquin, and carried in a procession by two to the upparige, which has been constructed over the dhupe. The car is also taken evidently, to the cremation ground. Those present upparige, and the chief mourner unties the bundle and places its contents on the car. all the present then leave the spot, and the barber removes the cloths from the car and pulls it down. Sometimes, if the dead person has been an important member of the community a small car is constructed, and taken in procession round the upparige.

When new gods invaded South India from the north they entered these temples, making alliances in most cases with their original occupant. The south Indian temple which started its career as a rude circle of stones around a grave, ended by becoming the abode of the mighty gods of the conquering Aryan religion.

SAIVISM AND SEPULCHRAL TEMPLES

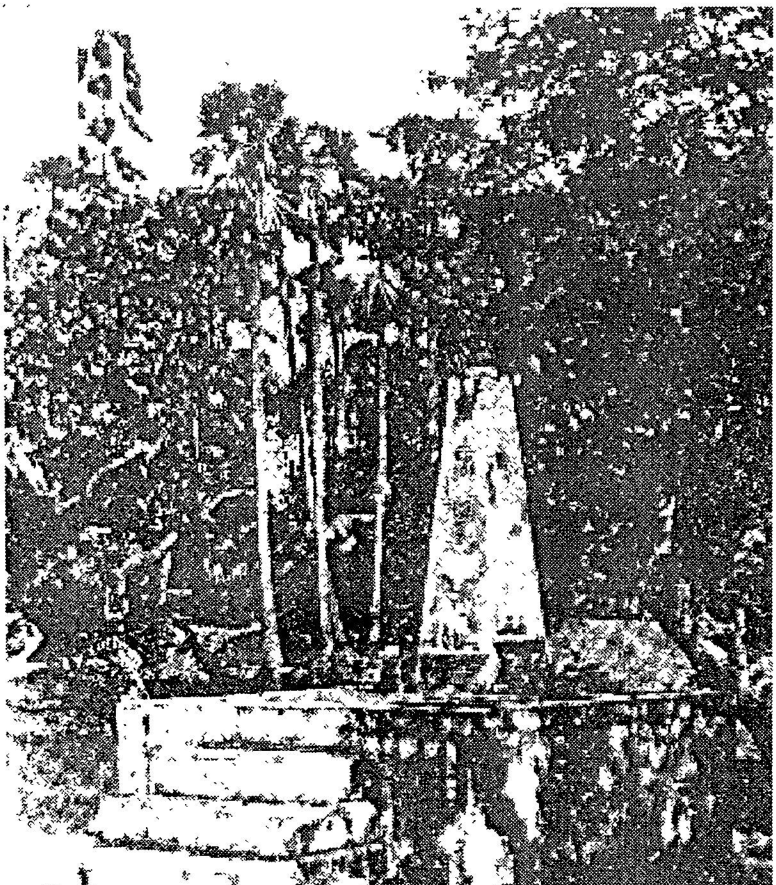
SAIVISM AND SEPULCHRAL TEMPLES

The term the Dravidian temple is often met with in the histories of Indian art. It is applied to south Indian temple in order to distinguish it from that of northern India and deccan. The need for such a distinction is obvious. South Indian temples differ from those of the north in certain important respects; the most important difference is the origin of the temples of the north and the south. It is generally supposed that there is a single type of temple in south India called the Dravidian temple. This is a mistake, says Dr. Venkataramanayya, in his essay on '***The Origin of the South Indian Temple***'. According to his theory there are two kinds of temples which are generally seen all over the southern India; the temples dedicated to higher gods of the Hindu pantheon, and those built in honour of the village deities. The latter type of temples are temples constructed for the persons died pre-maturely or met with violent death. In due course these deceased persons became village-guarding deities and festivals were celebrated every year for them. We have to consider the temples that are peculiar to certain localities like the '***Sudalai madan***' shrines of Thirunelveli.The present south Indian temple is the result of a syncretism of all these.

We have also to notice another important point in this connection. All the temples that have been mentioned above are intimately connected with the graveyard or the cremation ground. The connection with the graves is seen not only in the case of the village deities, but also in that of the temples of certain gods like Śiva, belonging to a higher plane of divine life. The earliest reference to Śiva's association with the cremation ground comes from the Mahabharata. In of the '***anusasanaparvan***' the god himself declares that there is no spot that is more sacred than the smasana. Therefore, he adds, '***the crematorium of all places pleases my heart.... Hence the crematorium is the sacred abode to me; .... It seems to me to be the very heaven***'.

The temples of Śiva, in almost all the important places of pilgrimage stand, or have at one time stood, in the cremation ground itself. It is probably for this reason that some of our ancient silpa-sastras enjoin that the temples of Śiva should be built outside the precincts of villages.

There is another type of example of Śiva's association with burial ground is found in the Tirunelveli area of Tamilnadu state. The most primitive representation of this type is the '***Sudalai madan's pillar***', which is a common feature of the area. The pillar is generally pyramidal



Sudalai Madan Pillar

in shape. Occasionally, pillars resembling miniature temple vimanas (as for instance, at Palayamkottai) are also seen. Three of these pillars stand together, although single ones are met with, standing here and there. They are supposed to be the dwelling places of '***Sudalai madan***' or the lord of the cremation ground.

The numerous temples that are dedicated to the god '***Smasanesvara***' in many places in South India might have had a similar origin. They generally stand in or near the graveyards. The custom of building Śiva temples over graves is by no means dead. Many communities in south India, such as the Lingayats, Kammalans, Jandras, Vellalars, still observe it ; but a temple is not built in every case of burial or cremation, because the poor cannot afford it. However, they set up a lingam over the graves. The rich, still build miniature Śiva shrines over them. It is not at all an uncommon sight for a casual visitor to a south Indian Hindu grave yard, to see a small shrine containing a lingam raising its head over hundreds of lingas set up on the graves in the neighborhood.

The origin of south Indian temple cannot be traced to the cult of any god. It had its birth in certain social and quasi-religious practices, which had no connection whatever with the worship of any particular god or goddess. We must look for its origin in the innumerable prehistoric graves that are seen everywhere in certain parts of south India and the deccan.

Hinduism is distinctly different from other religions because of holding an incomparable form of monism in accompaniment with the idea of other deities as subordinate to the non-dual supreme spirit. Every cult of the Hindus gives a particular name to this supreme spirit, holding all other gods and goddesses as his or her agents. Savisim is the religion of such a cult which holds lord Śiva as the supreme spirit, pervading the entire universe with his bigger form and at the same time residing within the body of every living being with his minutest form popularly called jivatman (soul in a body). Brahman and Vishnu, the lords of creation and subsistence respectively, according to this cult are subordinate to lord Śiva.

At different places of the different Vedas lord Śiva has been described as the creator, protector, and destroyer of the entire universe. While creating this universe, he assumes the form of brahman, while protecting the form of Vishnu, and while destroying the form of rudra. Apart from these three different forms, the lord also holds a mild and auspicious form known as Śiva, by which he grants protection to all, and

in which he is always kind-hearted. This form was originally known as bhava, as we know from the atharvavedasamhita (IV.28.1 ; X.1.23 ; XI.2.1.9.27-28 etc). In the rigveda as well as in the yajurveda, his Śiva or auspicious form also is found to be mentioned on different occasions (rigveda, I.187.3; II. 20.3; V. 5.9; VI45.17; VII.9.3 etc; while Yajurveda, ch.16 black yajurveda, IV.5.1).

The fact that lord Śiva was regarded as the supreme god even at the time of the atharvanaveda has also been admitted by Sir.R.G.Bhandarkar, who has observed: This god was Rudra Śiva, who, as we have seen , had by the time of atharvanaveda attained tot he dignity of the supreme god. The popularity of lord bhava or Śiva, even at the time of the atharvanaveda can be easily known from the different names given to him i.e. Bhava, sarva, isana, pasupati, ugra, mrdha, rudra and mahadeva (AV,XI .2;XV.5)

This Śiva form of the lord became popular day by day and was worshipped in images and lingas by the devotees. The satarudriya chapter of the yarjurveda, the svtasvataropanisad. The grhyasutras, puranas and epics testify to high popularity of Śiva. Different puranas prove beyond doubt that lord Śiva was highly popular even in long past.

The bhagavatapurana, which is an authoritative book of the vaishnava sect and is held by them as the supreme authority next to the Vedas only, tells us that even the gopas (cow - herds) who had their only desire to propriate vasudeva, had to worship Śiva and his consort for attaining their desired objects. They performed the worship of lord pasupati (Śiva) on the bank of the sacred river saraswathi, after having a holy dip into the said river.

It is known to all that one of the famous names of lord Śiva is pasupati. in the satapatha brahman we see fire god to be described as pasu along with some indication that the god is so called because of helping the people with his light. in the same book it is further said that the name pasupati was given to the lord because of his being the presiding deity of the herbs (osadhi) which protects the lives of living beings. Not only in the Vedas, but also in the puranas and other books of later date, the meaning of the name pasupati of the lord is given in the above way.

According to the nakulisa pāsupathā school also, the term pasu stands for jivatman and lord Śiva being the protector of the said jivatman is called pasupati. In the Āgamāsastras also, the name pasupati is found to be explained as the protector of living beings.

The pāsupathā system of worship-worship, which is prevalent now-a-days all over India, appears to have originated from nakulisa who according to the linga and vayu puranas was a contemporary of lord vasudeva, a prominent figure in the great bharata war. Both the puranas. Tell us that lord pasupati, assuming the form of mendicant (brahmacarin) had been walking hither and thither for taking an opportunity to serve the people and lead them to the proper way. Suddenly he found the dead body of a man, abandoned in a grave-yard (smasana). The lord, without the least hesitation entered into the dead body in the form of a soul, giving a new life to him. The place at which the lord made the said dead body alive, was given the name kayavatarana or kayarohana at a later date for commemorating the event. This incarnation of lord pasupati was known by the name nakulisa. As time passed on, this nakulisa got four sons (disciples) each of who was well-versed in the Vedic lore and of a high moral standard. The names of the four sons (or disciples) of nakulisa, according tot he lingapurana are kusika, garga, mitra, and kauruyya. The vayupuranan calls them by the names kusika, gargya, mitraka and rusta. All of them were devote worshipers of lord pasupati and they used to besmear their body with sacred ashes. Each of them used to worship a Śivalinga everyday. After serving lord pasupati and preaching his doctrine for a long time, the aforesaid four sons (or disciples) of nakulisa left this world, leaving the sacred duty of preaching the pāsupathā doctrine to their sons and disciples

Here we can give an example for the influence of psupatha saivaism in south India. A temple named kayarohanar temple at Nagapattinamin, Tamil nadu state. This temple should be one of the earliest temples of Tamil land. Its lord is sung by the Tamil hymnists Appar and Sambandar (7th century A.D) and Sundarar (early ninth century A.D.).

The very name is connected with the kakulisa cult. The god who entered into a dead body is the meaning of kaya arohana kaya means body and arohana is stakins it or occupying it. So, undoubtedly it is the lakulis a cult. Tradition says that there was a here a settlement of pasuptha sect from karohana in Gujarat. Where the miracle of Śiva entering into a dead body happened as per the legend.

The temple faces east. Behind the linga of karohanar, there is a sculpture of somaskandar surrounded by rishis as we find at vijayalaya cholisvaram at vikkanampundi. The devakoshta figures are dakshinamurthi, lingodbhavar, brahma, ardhanarisvaram, durgai and bhikshtanar as one see in the pallipadai panchavan madeviesvaram.

Plenty of evidential temples and inscriptions to show the influence of the pāsupathā saivism in south India, and there is no wonder in the erection memorial Śivalayas was in practice.

Now let us see the role of Saivism in the erection of the sepulchral temples in South India. Saivism is the dominating religion from the beginning in India, especially in South India. The faith of people in after death sequences made them to concentrate more on saivism, because it preached the formalities to get solvated after death. The god of '***destruction***' or the god of death, Śiva, is the main deity of the saiva religion.

Saivism had four sects including the pāsupathā and kalamukha. The other two sects are mild when these two sects are a bit vigorous. The pāsupathā

CULT OF THE DEAD

CULT OF THE DEAD

In ancient India, ancestor worship, or more broadly the cult of the dead, formed the staple of religious belief of the original inhabitants in early times. This is the opinion of Mr.A.H.Longhurst. '***The ancestor-worship strictly speaking, did not form the staple of religious belief of the original inhabitants. A study of the religion of some of the south Indian tribes, whose beliefs are supposed to have suffered no change, clearly shows that they worship gods other than the spirits of the departed ancestors. The gods occupy a more important place in the minds of these savages than the ancestor-spirits of the departed ancestors. The gods occupy a more important place in the minds of these savages than the ancestor spirits,***' this is the controversy of Mr. Venkatramanna.

Whether it was ancestral worship or the cult of the dead, it started to get practiced during the New stone Age period in South India. The megalithic burials were the origin of the sepulchral monuments. May be the idea of erecting such stone memorials for some other reasons than that of the ancestor worship, but we could not deny the originality.

Though the historians differed in their ideas, they didn't denied that there was a cult of dead existed. This cult did not involve the worship of the spirits of all the dead persons. Only spirits of those who had won great notability during their earthly career, received worship. Among the gollas, idigas, byadaru etc the common belief is that good men after their death become virulu, heroes and they are worshipped at regular intervals. The spirits of the wicked are feared. They are supposed to cause epidemics and famines. Unless their anger is appeased, they continue their work of destruction. Year after year new temples are built in honour of the spirits of the wicked persons and of those that suffered violent death. The temples of kanadadurgamma, podilamma. Thotakuramma, kotappakonda swami and a host of local deities all over the telugu districts had their origin in this fashion. Now the worship of all these goddesses and gods is certainly a cult of the dead. But it is neither ancestor-worship nor the worship of the spirits of all the dead persons. It is the worship of the dead notables.

The patient labour of archaeologists have brought to light thousands of graves which lie scattered all over south India and the deccan. They belong to different ages. The earliest of them go back to what is generally called the stone age; and the latest belong to the 15th and 16th centuries of the Christian era. They are classified by specialists into a

number of types, each of which is sharply distinguished from the others by special peculiarities of construction. The most primitive of them is perhaps the simple ring of stones, with three stones in the center, marking the place where the dead body lies buried. There are hundreds of these stone circle at Amaravati in the Krishna district, and archaeologists are of opinion that the place marks the site of the burial ground of some ancient city probably that of Dharanikota, the eastern capital of the Āndhra kings of the Satavahana dynasty. This is very probable as stone circles are still made use of by certain savage tribes to mark the place of burial. The Todas of the Nilgiri hills, even now burn their dead in a circle of stones for every corpse that is cremated; but they make use of the same circle for repeated cremation. The circle of stones that is put to this use is called by Todas an Āzāram; and the toda practice of constructing Āzārams give us some idea regarding the nature of the circles at Amaravati.

We have to start our inquiry with the cemetery of Dharanikota, the ancient capital of the Āndhras. Why did the people of this old city build stone circles around the graves of their dead? Were they required to serve any real purpose ? had they any religious or other significance ? what was the meaning of the three stones in the center ?. It is necessary that we must find answers to all these questions, if we desire to understand them properly. To begin with, we must ascertain the meaning of the three stones in the middle of the circle. Why three stones are found in a place where one would have been sufficient is certainly a mystery, which cannot easily be unraveled. It is, however, probable that the practice of placing three stones on the graves had a simple origin. They must have been placed to prevent the ghost of the dead man rising from the grace. The stones were originally placed apart, not together, one on the head, another on the abdomen, and a third on the legs. The practice is still observed by the natives of South India like the Boyas, a telugu tribe of hunters living in the hilly tracts on the westerns border of the telugu districts. The three stones seem to have been brought together after the introduction of cremation. Following the Aryan practice, the Dravidians cremated the dead body and buried the ashes; and the three stones which were originally placed in three different places on a grave were brought together, and deposited over the jar containing the ashes.

There appears to have grown up, at the same time a belief in the minds of men that the ghost of the dead man lives in the stones. The Khasis a savage people that live on our eastern frontier are accustomed to set up monoliths to honour their dead, a group of three or five or nine is set up for every dead man whose spirit is supposed to live in it ; three however is the most common number. The village deities who are closely

related to the spirits of the dead, are similarly represented. Potarazu, the brother and sometimes the husband of Poleramman is represented by three pyramidal or conical stones, '*Mariyatta*' is represented by three bricks in several places

In all these cases a single spirit or deity is represented by three or more stones. The number of stones does not appear to produce any disintegrating effect upon the spirit or the deity. Therefore we cannot be far from the truth, when the three stones in the midst of the circle at Amaravti represent the spirit of the dead man. The circle of stones surrounding the three stones or more generally the cairn has attracted much attention. Two or three theories which propose to explain its meaning have already been started. Mr.A.H.Longhurst is of opinion that the stone circles appear to be only intended as retaining walls for the earth and stones which were heaped over the stone sepulchered in the middle. Mr. Longhurst's theory has an exclusive reference to the circle surrounding cairns. He ignores completely the simple stone circles, such as those that are found at Amaravati. Moreover his theory fails to give a satisfactory explanation even of those circles that surrounds the cairns. Their presence in places where they are not at all required to perform the functions of retaining walls destroys the theory altogether. Another hypothesis is suggested by Mr. William crooke in his book, '*Things Indian*'. He says that the circle was probably intended as ghost hedge, to restrain the spirit within these assigned limits, or a sign that the site was taboo. This appears to the true. The burial ground is generally regarded as an impure place. Anyone who enters it is polluted and he requires to be purified, and still the practice of taking a head bath to enter into the living place after visiting the cremation or burial ground. What is true of the burial ground is equally true of individual graves. We find it recorded in the Rigveda that the Aryans considered the burial ground as taboo.
R.V.X.18 says :-

'I place this barrier (of stones) on this account that no one may go beyond it'

More generally, however, primitive people are afraid of the spirits of the dead. It is a common belief among them that the ghosts of the dead are unhappy, and that they wreak vengeance upon the living, if they neglect them after death. They are said to be the causes of epidemics and famines. It is , therefore, necessary to propitate them, and buy them off, by means of gifts.

The Birhors of central India are very much troubled by the fear of evil spirits. It is said that as soon as a Birhor is dead, his disembodied spirit becomes the prime object of fears and concern to his relatives and

other people of his settlements. And the observances and ceremonies customary during this period appear to have for their main object, the prevention of harm to the '*tanda*' through his spirit on the one hand and on the other hand to harm to his spirit through stray, malignant spirits. Even the offering of food laid out for the spirit appears to be promoted less by a feeling of affection for him than from fear and a desire to keep him agreeably engaged at a distance.

Again the spirit of the deceased hovers about in an unsettled state between the land of the living on the one side, and spirit world on the other, and is considered peculiarly dangerous to the community as well as their spirits are always dangerous. In their case, therefore, a new doorway to the hut is opened to take their corpses to the grave. These corpses are buried in a place apart from that where the other corpses are buried. Women and not men bury such corposes; the men only dig the graves and go away. Thorns are pricked into their feet to prevent them from leaving their graves.

The Mundas of Chota Nagpur worship a set of spirits called Banita Bongas. They consider it necessary to propitaiate these spirits. The Bonita Bongas are indeed no gods at all, nor are they regarded by the mundas as such. These malevolent entities are believed to be earth bound spirits of persons who died a violent and unnatural death. The propitiation of this class of spirits is the duty neither of the munda housholder nor of the munda village priest, but of the ghost finders. Occasionally, indeed the earth bound spirit of some deceased member of a family haunts his old fields and may do some mischief and has in such a case to be propitiated by sacrifice.

It is interesting to note that the Mundas who are closely related to Birhors, are in the habit of erecting rough cromlechs over the graves of their dead. A grave is dug at a selected spot in the '***susan smasana***' and in it the earthen vessel containing the bones of the deceased is interred. Along with the bones a little rice, oil mixed with turmeric and a few copper coins peices are put into a vessel. After the excavation is filled up, the large stone slab is placed upon it, supported on four small pieces of stone at the four corners. The connection between the simple circle of stones and the cromlech is well known. The latter was developed from the former, after a long process of evolution in the art of building tombs. It is from such beliefs as have been described above that the extensive practice of worshipping the spirits of the dead arose. The true religion of the masses in south India is based upon the fear of demons with which their minds are filled. It is this fear that induced the ancient inhabitants of

the land to take many precautionary steps to restrain their malignant activity one of the steps which they adopted is to circumscribe their sphere of activity by erecting a magic circle of stones around the grave. The stone circles which form a striking feature of pre historic grave had their origin in the need which the primitive people felt to prevent the ghosts from wandering far from the graves.

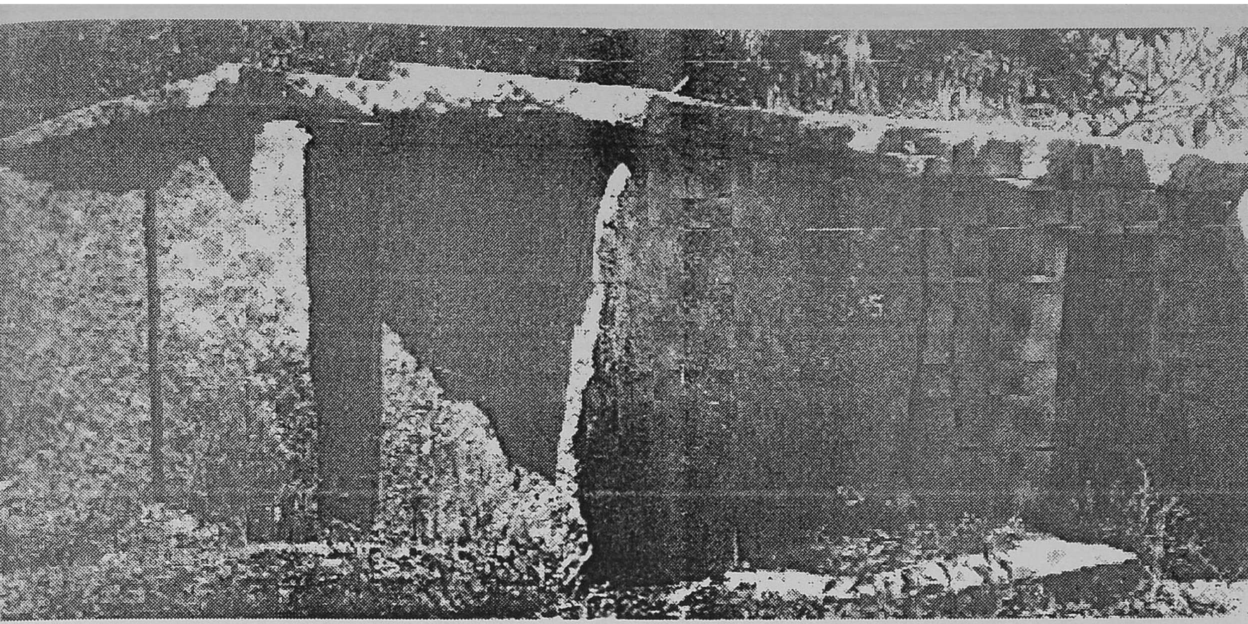
The meaning of the stone circles at Amaravati has been made clear by what has been said above; but these circles were not a peculiar feature of Āndhra social customs in a by gone age. They are still erected in the deccan and western India in a modified form. The inhabitants of these parts are not in the habit of erecting stone circles around the graves of the dead; but they build them in order to honor the demon, vetal or bhetala whom they commonly worship. Vetal is at present regarded as an avatara of Śiva; but if we examine his past career, the fact that he was originally a demon becomes clear. The cult of this demon is said to be very ancient. Two arguments are generally advanced to prove its antiquity. In the first place vetal in deccan has no image in the shape of any animal whatever. It the custom of likening the gods to men and other animals. Secondly vetal has no temple, but is worshipped in the open air, generally under the shade of a wide spreading tree. This circumstance also connects his worship with the most ancient forms of idolatry. Thus the cult of the dead is proved to be the origin or idea of the sepulchral temples among the South Indian people.

CHAMBER TEMPLES

CHAMBER TEMPLES

As it is stated already, from the third century BC onwards the motive behind the erection of memorials and its transformation could be analysed with archaeological evidence. The gradual transformation of the megalithic cult into the hero cult happened due to the changes in the contemporary society people started to erect hero stones for the heroes, sati stones for the women who plunged into the funeral pyre of their deceased husbands etc. The hero stones or the inscribed stones with bas-relief figures of the heroes got another form by having supporting stone slabs at both the sides and the top. These type chambers are called as chamber temples or soul houses.

In southern India, these special soul houses were generally set up in the form of large or small dolmens, usually consisting of one large flat slab of stone supported by three upright slabs set on end or on edge so as to form a small chamber with one side open to serve as an entrance. These type of monuments are found on the top of a small granite hill at Kalyandrug in the Anantapur district of Andrapradesh State, in South India. It is of the usual rectangular shape, formed of three huge upright granite slabs for the three sides and a fourth for the roof; the front which is always to be east or north side being open. At a later period, dolmens of this kind were sometimes converted into, hero-shrine dedicated to some local chief or warrior who died, or was slain in battle and whose wife or wives committed sati on his pyre. Hero-shrines of this type were found in the same district. The back slab of the one bears a crude representation of three warriors with drawn swords carved in bas-relief. It is situated about half a mile to the west of the hamlet of Mudigallu and three miles from Kalyandrug. Some more shrines of the same were found at Rayadurg in the same district. The bas-relief represents two warriors with drawn swords. In this case, it is carved on a separate slab of stone used in constructing these hero-shrines, were taken from some of the old dolmens or ruined '***kistvaens***' which are found in this district. The style of the sculptures indicates that the figures depicted represent petty chiefs or feudal barons of the Vijayanagar period and in all probability, they are not earlier than the 15th century A.D., although it is possible that the stone slabs themselves may have originally belonged to dolmens or kistvaens of the Pre-historic period. The local villagers possess no reliable information concerning the history of these hero-shrines. They appear to respect them, and in some cases offerings and vown are still made at the curious shrines which they generally speak of as "***gods' houses***" and believe that some local deity does actually reside in them.



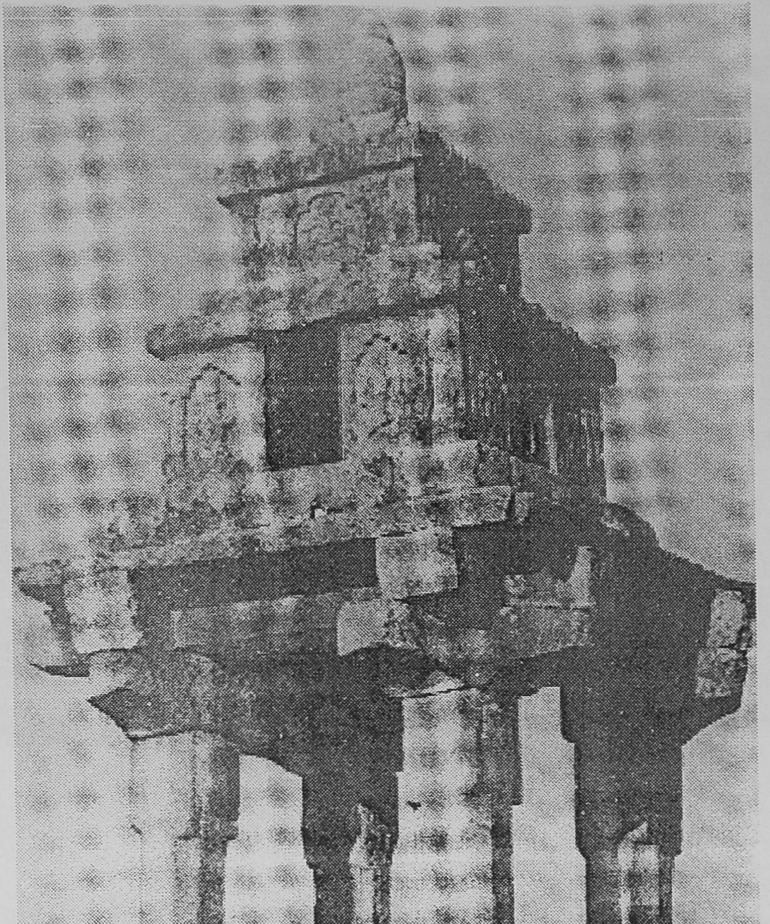
Madivala: Chamber Temples

Belchalwadi: Ramalingesvara Temple – Old Photo

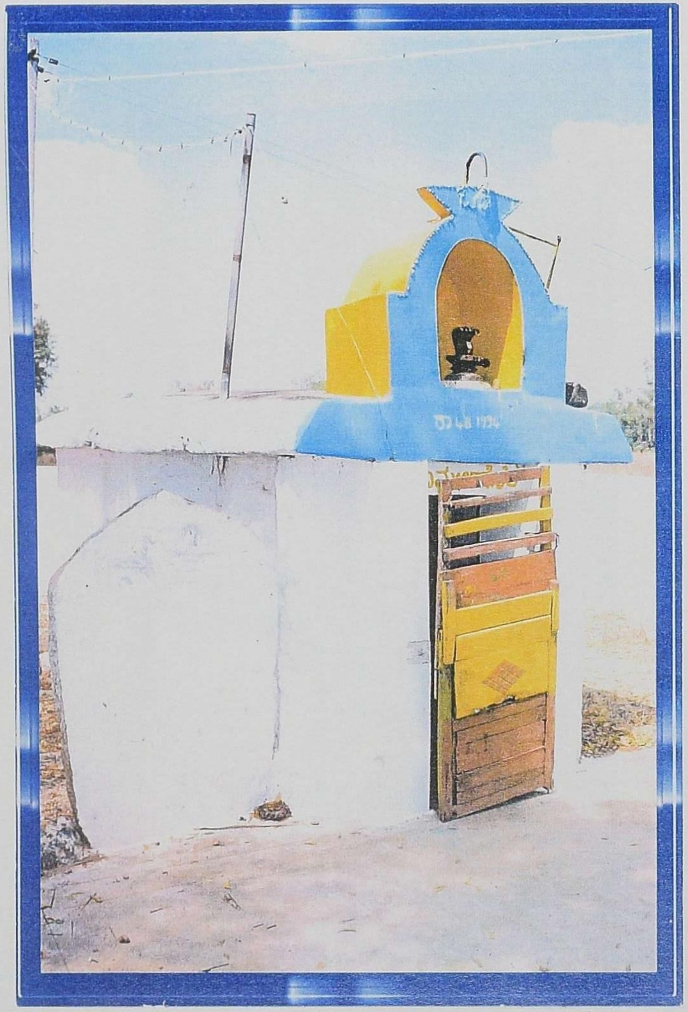
Though generally contained a hero stone inside, a special class of dolmen – like chamber temples were raised and perhaps worshipped too. These were set up in the village lands and waysides. They consist of a large flat slab of stone supported by three upright slabs in edge to form a square or rectangular chamber with one side open to serve as an entrance. They outwardly look like the megalithic dolmen cists of the type visible over ground. They are in clusters and mostly oriented to east – west with entrance towards ease i.e. the rising sun. these are periodically worshipped also in memory of the dead who sacrificed their lives for the cause of the family or the kingdom. Even lingas were consecrated in these shrines.

Good notes on such shrines noticed by the famous archaeologist Mr.A.H.Longhurst at Kuttikindabilam, Guntur district and Kambaduru, Anatapur district which contained, the presence of a cylindrical stone in the sanctum of such temples. Some of these "soul houses" were transformed into temples by installing village gods and goddesses. There is no doubt that these chamber temples reveal an aboriginal practice widely known throughout the country. In all the above cases of chamber temples, the rear slabs invariably contained a sculptured deity in relief or a depiction of a dead hero on a centrally placed slab and a symbolic stone or image is fixed on the bare floor of the chamber or on an anvil. In case of small chambers, which are generally square- the back slab itself has the sculptured relief of heroes or war scores.

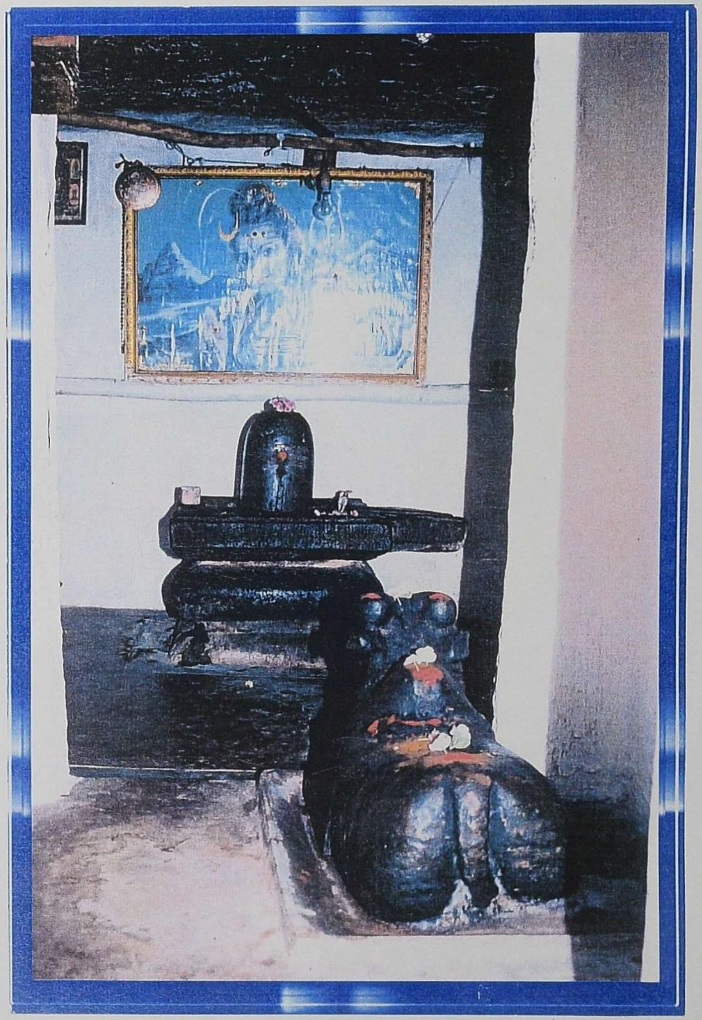
Linga temples or matri shrines within the complex of such memorial clusters were noticed at Dodshivara and Madivala in Kolar district of Karnātakā state. At Madivala, 2km from Malur in kolar district within the fields beyond the Gangādharesvara temple, several square chambers of slabs housed these sculptured viragals or hero stones. In and around Dharmapuri taluk, not less than seven chambers containing inscribed and sculptured depicitions were found . The earliest group belongs to the reigining of Śivamara I (a Gangā ruler) from Kattarasampatti. The inscription in Tamil vatteluthu characters (725 A.D) records a death of a hero at the battle of kudal. A cluster of six chamber temples were found at Kindagapatti, near Dharmapuri (2 km west of the village proper) on the slopes of the hill called '***Vattalamalai***' overlooking '***gaja kanda***' tank. They are rectangular in plan built of dressed slabs. A bigger slab placed over three orthostate slabs is invariably depicted with an action packed war scene in bold relief. A few among these bear inscriptions in kannada characters assignable to eight- ninth century A.D.



Dodshivara: Mana Stambha



Temple – General View
Rāmalingeswara, Belachalawadi.



Sivalinga (sanctum),
Rāmalingeswara, Belachalawadi.

Temple – General View - Rāmalingeswara, Belachalawadi.

Temple – General View - Rāmalingeswara, Belachalawadi.

A huge cluster of such stone chambers were found at a place called Jarugundinne near Siddappa temple, at Dodshivara. .Besides such chambers containing viragals or hero stones, Dodshivara of Karnātakā has also revealed a tall '***manasthamba***' type set up having a dvitala square cell, the lower chamber with openings towards the cardinals like the sarvor to – bhadrika shrines of jaina faith. It is noteworthy that the '***Sudalai madan pillar***' in the Tirunelveli district of Tamilnadu has the similarity of this. The '***bhitti***' part of the manasthamba has some low relief carvings flanking the entrances and capped by kapota with vyala-mukhas five on each side. The kumbha, kalasa-stupi on the top clearly indicate that shrine has all the characteristics of a temple. The plain cut corbels support the cross-beams. This pillared shrine is closer to the dolmen-chambers.

At Belchalwadi, in Mysore district, of Karnātakā state, the Ramalingesvara temple located in the field is an interesting class among the chamber temples noted earlier in kolar area raised on thick slabs planted close to each other on edge. On plan it reveals a simple square cell fronted by narrow ȧntarala and a narrow entrance signified by plain tetragonal stone verticals supporting the cross beam. The flat roof was achieved by two layers of slabs of brown slate, the molded quarter- round kapota course resembles the flat roof of Huchimallikydi (western temple) at Aihole.The linga, a quartzitic pebble at the center of the sanctum was placed over a high square pitha made up of a padma jagati,tripatta-kumuda and topped by squarish ridged pindika with the snout towards north. The linga closely resembles the one at Homma. On comparative grounds this small temple could be assigned to eight century A.D. and is a rare example. At present this temple is modernised a bit, but still it clings to its originality. This can be seen in the illustrations.

As stated above, bigger rectangular chambers on slabs which were found at Madivala, the saptamatri images were fixed over a raised platform on the back of the shrine chamber which is partitioned by a row of vertical slabs, four in all planted at equal distance to impart a look of an ante-chamber or antarala. The entrance is towards north. Though temple architecture evolced in grand manner, still these types of temples receives their own merits from the villagers and the tribal people.

SATI (MĀSATI) TEMPLES

SATI (MĀSATI) TEMPLES

When we discuss about the sepulchral temples, we have to include the *'māsti'* or *'Māsati'* temples which were believed to got erected for the ladies who committed *'sati'*. *'Sati'* means the self immolation of the wife, immediately after the death of her husband. We find so many temples of this kind all over the south India. Though they do not possess any authentic or archaeological evidences, the traditional stories and beliefs of the people for a long past, we have to accept them as it is told and these temples also to be researched for our present purpose.

We have many references on the practice of *'sati'* like the smrti texts, literary works in Sanskrit and regional languages ,inscriptions and foreign travelers' accounts, supply us with rich data. Historically speaking, *'sati'* i.e., the act of self immolation of the wife on the death of her husband had been in vogue since antiquity. The harappan culture produced an evidence of a double burial placed in a pit found at lothal, Gujarat state. Though it is not a valid proof for the *'sati'* the practice of multiple burial is proved with that evidence. There is a reference in the *'Rigveda'* and *'Atharvana Veda'* which together vaguely point to the custom of sati sometime before (Rv.10.18.8;Av.18.3.1) and no longer in vogue at the time of composition of Vedic mantras.

In *'Ramayana'* Vedavathi tells Ravana that her mother entered into the fire along with the dead body of her husband Kusadhvaja(7.`7.`3).In *'Maha bharatha'* in the *'Mausala paruvam'* it is said that the custom of sati was common among the Yadava community. Four wives of Vasudeva namely Devaki, Bhadra, Rohini and Madira ascended his funeral pyre (Mahabharatha XVI,8-18,19) and Rukmini, Gandhari, Saiya, Haimavthi and Jambavathi, the wives of Krishna, ascended the funeral pyre on hearing the news of the death of their husband (Mahabharatha XVI,8-71).

In Dharmasastra literature, the first clear statement on *'sati'* is found in *'vishnusmirit'* of about 3rd century AD. In south India we have the earliest reference to the wife desiring burial along with her dead husband in *'purananuru'*(250). In a *'purananuru'* poem(246) Perumkopendu, the queen of Bhutapandyan, famed as the one who conquered Olaiyur, expressed her resolve to commit *'sati'*(Tippaydal) on the funeral pyre of her husband.

Material relics of such *'sati'* practices in the 3rd-4th centuries A.D. in the form of inscribed and sculptured stones showing the *'sati'*

descending into the fire pit have been excavated in Nagarjunakonda, Andrapradesh state (IAR 1958-59). The same scene has been described in '***Silappadikaram***' the Tamil literature(1.23:158-66) relating to the bereaved wife, Nili, who after the execution by the king of her husband as a suspected spy, feeling the injustice got on top of the hill and went up to heaven by ascending a cloud ladder. Subsequently Kannaki the heroine of the epic to whom the above story was related earlier, after the 14th day of her husband's murder by the king, venerates it and prepares for her ascending to heaven to join her husband. Still the '***pathini cult***' is in vogue and the people of south worship her as the goddess of chastity. There was a temple erected by the Chera ruler, Cheran Chenguttuvan who was the brother of the author of '***Silappathikaram***', in the Kerala state. Kannaki is compared with goddess '***durga***'.

Coming to the inscriptional evidence of the practice of '***sati***', we have the instance of Gangāmadeviyar, the wife of Kodumbalur chieftain Virasola Ilangovar, who is said to have made endowments for a lamp in the temple before she committed '***sati***'. The inscription belongs to Chola Parantaka-I in the early part of the 10th century.(ARE376/1903). Vanavan mahadevi, queen of Sundara Chola Parantaka II(AD957-973), is another instance of a queen committing '***sati***' on the king's death. The Thiruvalangadu copper plates of Chola Rajendra-I describes the '***sati***' of Sundara Chola's queen in a rather euphemistic manner.(SII vol. III pt.3:/205). Her daughter Kundavai, the elder sister of Chola Rajendra-I, consecrated two icons of Sundara Chola and Vanavan madevi in the big temple at Thanjavur.(ARE287/1917 AND 47 OF 1918). Another curious and interesting case of '***sati***' is to be found from a Tamil inscription from the temple at Elavanasur, district South Arcot, of the 12th century AD. It is the case of a lady bodyguard of the chief Rājarāja Malaiya kulayan alias Nirerrperumal.(ARE 156/1906).The Rani of the Pudukkottai Tondaiman, Raja Vijaya Raghunatha Tondaiman, ruler of an another erstwhile Tamil state, by name Ayi Ammayi, committed sati likewise on the death of her husband in 1807.

The erection of structural shrines over the sites of '***satis***' seems to have come into vogue even in the time of the Tamil epic '***Manmekalai***'. In its description of the Cakkaravalakkottam, the great necropolis of Kaverippumpattinam are mentioned such shrines, along with those of other sepulchral shrines for other categories of people, in proximity with the temple of Kadu-amr Selvi or Durga. They are mentioned by the phrase '***orungu udan mayntha pendirkku-ayinam***', that is for those wives, who immolated themselves along with their dead husbands. The shrines looked like hillocks. These shrines would belong to the same

category as what are later called pallipadai temples raised over the site of the death. The details proves that there was a practice of erecting sepulchral shrines in general and specially for the females who committed sati and the important point is they resembled the other contemporary temples of gods.

It is well known that there exist a large number of temples erected to commemorate the names of '*māstis*'. In a place called Konda halli , Channagiri taluk, Shimoga district of Karnātakā state, there is a small temple stands at the entrance of the village. The observation of Shri. Chandramurthy in his essay on, '***Two māsti temples in Karnātakā***', as follows:- Kondadahalli and Cikkahudevu are two small villages not far from the road which connects Chitra durga Shimoga via Santhabennur, in Karnātakā. The distance between the two villages is about half a mile. A tiny '***māsti***' (Māsati) temple stands at the entrance of each of these villages

The Māsatiyamma was a daughter of a lingayat chief of the village Dummi, which is about eight miles from Kondahalli. She got married to a rich man who got little time to visit her. When she became pregnant her character was questioned by the villagers. Abandened by her parents and the villagers, she went with her husband and the new born child. One lower caste servant accompanied them. He misbehaved on the way and killed the master. As a revenge the lady cut his head and went to Kondahalli. There she bought a land, got a fire pit made and entered into it. After sometime, she appeared in the dream of the villagers and ordered him to build a temple for her. That is the temple mentioned above. Many māsati temples have been worshipped by their own group of families(okkalu) for generations.

The present temple is very small, about six feet long, six feet wide and seven feet high. It has a small compound. Inside the temple are two crude stones, representing the husband and the wife. The former is called '***gandana tale***'(husband's head) It is roughly triangular in shape, almost resembling a neolithic stone axe, with the butt-end pointing upwards. To its left is the '***ammana kallu***'(stone of the goddess), representing Māsatiamma. the position and relative height of the two stones approximate well to the concept of a hindu couple. The wife sitting at the left side of the husband. The temple has no door, and it is said by the people that the Māsatiamma told in the dream of the villager not to fix a door. There is a festival celebrated regularly once in a year. On the occasion, women used to sing lengthy songs in praise of the lady and her ascension to heaven.

It is different story with the '*māsati*' temple in the nearby village Chikkudevu, where the local goddess worshipped only by the '*Beda*' caste. The story of this temple is that the betrothed man of the Māstiamma died before the marriage in a battle. But the girl who took him her husband already, committed '*sati*'.

A survey of references to the '*sati*' institution in Kannada literature and folklore throws some light on various points of interest. In Pampa's '*Vikramarjuna*'(10th century A.D.) there is a reference to a young innocent wife who says she will end her life soon after hearing the news of the death of her husband and hasten to welcome in heaven before the heavenly damsels seize him. This shows that '*sati*' was an accepted thing in 10th Century A.D.

The lemon fruit motif which we see in māsti sculptures has so far evaded satisfactory explanation. In classics like, '*Śiva tatva cintamani*', there are clear references to the bridegroom holding a lemon fruit in his right hand. It is very clear that the fruit had a significance in marriage ceremonies.

Since the '*sati*' is connected with the marital relationship, the symbolic identity of lemon fruit could have been depicted with the '*māsati*' cult.

In Tamil Nadu, at a place called '*Aanaimalai*' in Coimbatore district, we see a temple of this type. It is locally called as '*Masani amman*' which can be taken as '*Māsati amman*' or '*Masana amman.*' The tradition of this place is that the deity is mainly for the easy delivery of the pregnant ladies and solve the problems of the ladies who has fertility and uterus problem. The story about the goddess is believed that a pregnant lady died during her delivery time or killed by somebody. Still to take vengeance on the persons who harmed them, people approaches this deity and applies chilli paste on the installed stone in front of the temple. The same type of practice of the other Māsti' temples are found here. The lemon. fruit is the main offering to the goddess. We have already seen that lemon fruit is the main identification with the '*māsti*' temples of Karnātakā and Āndhra.

The festival celebrated to the goddess, every year is the '*Gundam Iranguthal*' or '*Poomidhi thiruvizha*'. It means '*entering into the fire*' which may be reminding the '*sati*' rites. There are more than two hero stones found in the adjacent to the temple, in which we see a king and many of his queens. The temple situated on the bank of a river and the main deity is made of cement morter, a recling posture of a female which is a giant size one. The stone installed in front of the temple might

have been the '*sati*' stone which is still used for the chilli paste rites. The reclining image might have been erected at a later stage. The temple was a small one in past, and at present modernised with additions and extensions. The people allover Tamilnadu believes the power of this goddess and visits this place thousands in number every day.

The famous village goddess in the south, is '***Mariamman***'. The story of this deity is also resembling the '*sati*'. There are plenty of Mariamman temples in south India with the names like '***Muthu Mariamman***', '***Kottai Mariamman***', '***Karu Mariamman***',etc,. Each and every village of the south posses any one of the deities as their village god. They celebrate festivals every year during the summer season. They believe that '***Small pox***' and '***Chicken pox***' and '***Cholera***' were the diseases created by the goddess '***Mariamman***'. If she is not satisfied with the offerings and worship, they fear that she will cause those epidemic and destroy the whole village. The story of '***Mariamman***' is told as follows:-

The marriage of the '***Mariamman***' took place and on the very same day, her husband got murdered by somebody, due to the negligence of the villagers. So she was widowed on the very same day and committed '*sati*'. She was worshipped for her chastity and believed to be a destroyer of evil doers. In due course, she became the village goddess. The religious ceremonies during the festival supports this view. The first day morning, the statue or the rude stone in the sanctum, is decorated with flowers, jewels, and new saree green in colour. But the very same day, the decorations removed and she is given a white saree, which is meant for the widows in south India. The ceremony is told in Tamil, '***Andru katti andre aruthal***', which means '***tying the mangal sutra and removing it on the same day***'.

If we go deep in this route, we have to conclude all the village deities were human beings at one time and deified after their premature death. Still in many families in the south, if an unmarried girl dies, she is been deified and they have a small shrine in their own residential premises and present daily offerings. All the important problems of the families are decided after getting the auspicious signal from the family deity.

Today we have many gigantic temple complexes and conduct many rituals in a very grand manner. But, even then this cult still survives and maintain its popularity among the common people. Still the majority of the people of south India trust the neem leaves as the best medicine

for chicken pox and smallpox. They identify the neem tree as the favorite abode of the '***Marriamman***' and believe that she only can prevent or cure the epidemic. So they use the nee leaves as her blessings. Though science proves that neem leaves are the best anti- bacterial, the illiterate and ignorant people whom does not know about the medicinal value of the leaves, uses it with pure and blind faith on the goddess. The neem tree itself is addressed by them as, '***pathini tree***' which means the tree of the chaste woman. In those days it was believed that the women who die with their husband are the chastiest females.

MEMORIAL TEMPLES FOR SAINTS

MEMORIAL TEMPLES FOR SAINTS

Leaving the stone age and the primitive period of history, if we see the historical period, the erection of memorial shrines was mainly for the religious saints. In all the religion the priests and the preceptors were respected that the rulers. Even the kings themselves were humble and obedient to the saints. In South India, it started with the Buddhist chaityas and stupas. Though the idea of erecting the memorial shrine on the relics of Buddha is borrowed from Hinduism, we do not have any existing evidence. Jainas also started making and dedicating bastis for their deceased religious teachers. We get plenty of examples of this type of monuments all over South India. Here we deal only with the Hindu memorial temples in south India. So, we must concentrate on the Hindu monuments of worship.

In the Tamil country every Śiva temple contains a set of sixty three images representing the sixty-three '***nayanmar***' or saints of Tamil saivism, and every Vishnu temple contains a group of sculptures of the '***Alvars***' or the saints and the acharyas or the preceptors of Tamil vaishnavism. Certain sculptures of Vaishanava Acharyas are attested by tradition and by chronicles to be real portraits, and mention may therefore be made of them.

MEMORIAL TEMPLES FOR THE VAISHNAVA SAINTS

For Ramanuja, the greatest of the preceptors of Vaishnavism(1018-1138),there was an image installed in a sub-shrine in the Sri Ranganatha temple' at Srirangam, in Tamilnadu state. Tradition says that the shrine of Ramanuja at Srirangam has been reared on the spot where he was interred, that the '***Mulavighraha***' is placed right above his remains, and that this '***vigraha***' is fashioned out of clay, red earth, and the ochre-coloured garment worn by him in his last days. It was not a regular practice of Vaishnavists to erect memorial shrines for the dead, but for Ramanuja, it might have been an exception. Because for the Vaishnavists, he is the main '***guru***' and they respect him equally to lord '***Vishnu***'. That is why still in the same temple , they render regular offerings and worship to the '***Ramanuja***' shrine as it is done to the main deity, '***Ranganatha***'. When the main god is taken for procession, the '***utsava murty***' of Ramanuja is also accompany him. The Vaishnavites believes that he is not at all dead, but still alive.

A statue of another great Vaishnava preceptor, Vedanta desika, was installed in the temple of Srirangam immediately after his death. Thiru

mangai alvar, a personality of much earlier times, have a shrine in the same temple. he same chronicle says elsewhere that in 1512 A.D. likenesses were carved and set up, and inscriptions incised, in memory of two '***jiyars***' and '***ekangies***' who some twenty years earlier, as a protest against the exactions and persecutions of a chieftain, Koneri-rayan, had committed suicide by throwing themselves from the gopura of the temple. But at a later stage, the installation of portrait sculptures of human beings was banned. It was told that the lord '***Ranganatha***' himself appeared in a devotee's dream and ordered to ban this.

In one of the minor shrines of the '***Arulala perumal***' temple at Kanchipuram we have an image of Lakshmi kumara Tatacharya, the great guru of Venkata I of the Vijayanagara line. To one who is curious to know how he deserves a place in this temple the answer is plainly written in the numerous inscriptions on its walls, which make mention of his attainments and achievements and the innumerable ways in which he was of service to the temple.

Opposite to the shrine of the goddess in the Vishnu(Sarangapani) temple at Kumbakonam is a niche in which is placed a figure which represent certain Lakshmi kumara Tatacharya. This tiny shrine is under the control of some persons who are evidently among his descendents, and '***naivedya***' is offered by them to the image everyday.

We can see even today a hundreds of the '***Brindavans***'(memorials) in the campus of the Krishna temple at Udupi in Karnātakā. Periodical offerings and worship by the descendents of the deceased is still in practice. These examples proves that though the vaishnavism doesn't allow the burials in the temple premises or in the vicinity of the temples, the religiously great people were given exceptional chances.

In addition to the above we have a list of temples for the religious personalities like '***Guru Ragavendra***' at Mantralaya, '***Baba***' temple at Shiridi (which is visited by all sects of religious people) etc., as living examples.

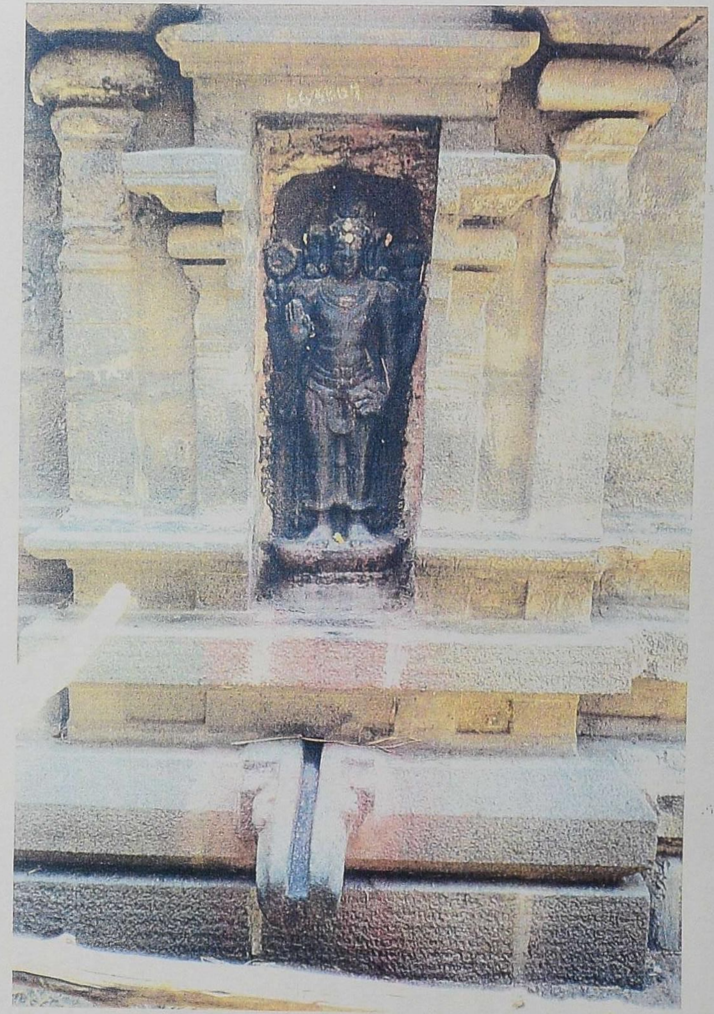
MEMORIAL TEMPLES FOR SAIVA SAINTS

The Cholas of the middle and the later periods seems to have been deeply interested in the saiva cult called the Lakulísa cult. It is likely that Thiruvotriur, 18 km from Madras in Tamilnadu state, was a strong center of this cult during these periods and that there is a shrine in the '***Adipurisvara temple***' was dedicated to Lakulísa. A small square stone

Goulīswarā Shrine – General View – Ādipureeswarar Temple, Tiruvotriyur.

Goulīswarā Shrine – General View – Ādipureeswarar Temple, Tiruvotriyur.

Vishnu (Backside Niche Figure),
Goulīswarā Shrine - General View
Ādipureeswarar Temple, Tiruvotriyur.



Inscriptions (Bramha as Niche Figure),
Goulīswarā Shrine – General View
Ādipureeswarar Temple, Tiruvotriyur.

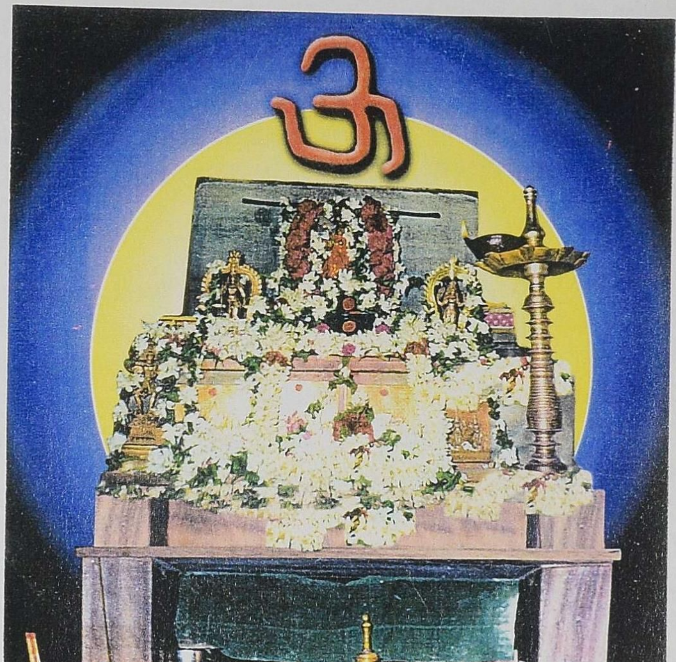
structure situated in the second prakara of the main shrine of Adipurisvara temple built during Rajendra-I's period, mentioned here and the inscriptions says that the shrine is dedicated to the Lakulísa. Rajadhiraja-II, is said to have attended a festival in the shrine; two gurus Chaturanantha panditha and Vagisvara panditha were also present on the occasion and the latter explained the soma siddhantha (the philosophy of the kapalika sect of saivism) in the royal presence. The shrine faces east, and comprises a garbhagriha and an antarala in front of it. The presiding deity now called Goulisa or Gaulisvara is in the chin mudra pose the lower left hand is held parallel to the ground and close to the torso, with the palm open upwards, the upper right hand holds a bowl. The devakosta in the rear(west) houses a fine Vishnu image, and that in the north, one of Brahma.

The Goulisa shrine also houses a fine image in black granite of Adi sankara, shown seated on high pedestal and his four disciples shown sitting cross legged and in the anjali pose, at his feet. We have no indication as to where and when this was originally installed. It may be of interest to mention that in the days of Rajendra I, its management in the hands of Lakulísa pandita, the head of the math of saivas of the pāsupathā sect.

In addition to these temples, we could see shrines for the '*Siddhas*' of the past. They were respected as semi gods even when they were alive, because of their extra ordinary powers to cure the diseases and execute miracles. It is evident in the '*Dandayuthapani*' temple at the top of the hill Palani, that there exists a separate shrine for the siddhar, '*Bhogar*'. The tradition says that Bhogar underwent '*jeeva samadhi*' and his mortal remains are there under the shrine at present.

On the top of the famous Palani hill, the '*Dhandayuthapani*' temple is located with wide prakaras, many pillared mandapas and many sub- shrines. In the second prakara of this temple, at the south west corner we can see the shrine of Bhogar. Evidences are there to prove that he was the person who made the '*Nava pashana*' image of '*Lord Dandayuthapani*' which is the main deity of the temple. It is told that being made of a combination of nine poisons at the correct ratio to cure all the diseases.

The Bhogar shrine is west facing with the prakara entrance at the eastern side. Still the daily worship and the chanting of '*ashtotra sahasranama*' are rendered to the deity. There is a maragatha lingam installed on the '*peetam*' which is present in the shrine. Not only this



Siddar Bhogar, Dandayuthapani Temple, Palani.

shrine, but also a small prayer hall and an underground chamber are there to prove that Bhogar lived there before attaining '*jeeva samadhi*'. It is told that there are other memorials of the disciples of Bhogar, like Pulippani sithar etc are still in the hill area. It is to be noted that the administration and worship of the '***Subramanya***' temple and also Bhogar shrine was conducted by the Pulippani sithar, the direct disciple of Bhogar who was not a Brahmin. In 1623 A.D.,when the territory was under the control of the Madurai Nayaka rulers, The chieftain of Thirumalai Nayaka raja visited this temple once. At that time he felt uncomfortable to see the non brahmins doing the ceremonies at the temple and hesitated to receive the sacred ash etc,. So, immediately after his return to the headquarters, he issued a copper plate order which is known as '***Ramappayyan copper plates***'. According to the instructions of the plates, there were four brahmin priests brought from outside and the priesthood was given to them..

The information given in the district gazetteer of Madurai, about this is briefed below:-"In the Mackenzie collections, it is confirmed by local accounts, states that canarese non-brahmin Udaiyar first set up a small shrine on the Śivagiri and that for some time he conducted the worship in it. Eventually in the time of Thirumalai Nayaka, he was induced by that ruler's general Ramappayya, who visited the town, to hand over to the brahmins the actual performances of pooja and was given in return certain duties of Superintendents and all rights to receive certain annual presents and to shoot off, at the Dasara festival, the arrow which symbolises Subramanya's victory over Idumban, a demon . His descendants have ever since performed this rite. Many of them are buried at the foot of the steps leading up to the hill."

The present heir of Pulippani sithar is Srimat. Śivanandha Pulippani pathira swamy. He administers the present '***Pulippani ashramam***' which is situated at the foot of the hill, where the samadhi of Pulippani sithar himself is located and regularly worshipped.

SAMBANDAR AND APPAR SHRINES

The Mantrapurisvarar temple at Usattanam, presently Kovilur in the Tanjavur district consists of Sambandar and Aappar shrines. This later Chola temple belongs to Rājarāja III period. An inscription of the tenth year of Rajendara III (are 186 of 1908) records a gift of land for offerings to the shrine of pillaiyar nayanar sambandhar and of thirunavaukkarasu nayanar, appar.

We have already discussed that the images of the 63 saiva nayanmars could be seen in the Śiva temples. Here it is evident that they were given separate shrines, and also gifted for regular offerings.

In the 12 reignal year of this king, an officer of him, called Vanaraya alias Soliyavaraiyam, made a gift of land to the image of '***pallavan-madeviesvaram udaiya nayañar***' (are 210 of 1908). From another record are 218 of 1908 which mention a gift of land to a math. We come to know of a saiva teacher called paripurana Śivacharya who headed the math called kuttadu nayanar matham located on the west of the temple. A gift of land for the maintenance of a flower garden was made in the 17th year of the king . An inscription of the 28th year are 216 of 1908 records a gift of land for offering to the image of tirujnanam perra pillaiyar sambandar .

This was a period of great popularity of the nayanmars. In many temples their images were setup ; numerous saiva math's for the propagation and encouragement of saivism were setup and flourished.

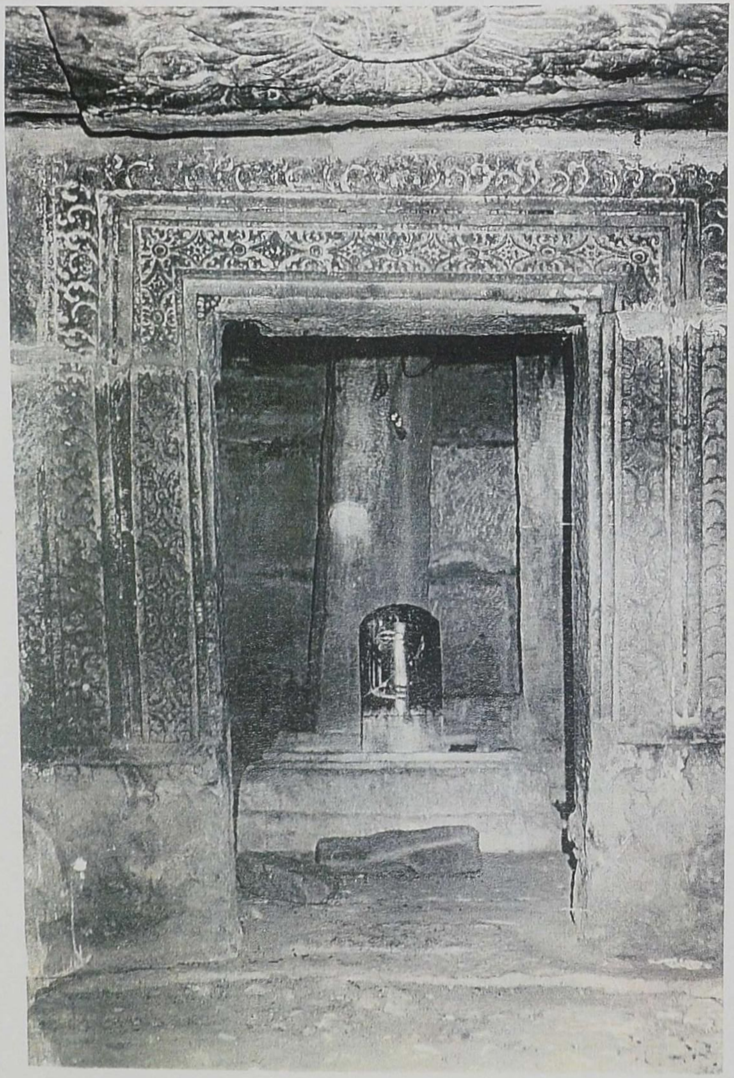
Dr.S.R.Balasubramaniam states that usually the funerary temples were erected over the places of burial of the mortal remains of the ascetics, saints and sages. It is understood that preference was given to the preceptors that the rulers. One of the latest and most popular of such sepulchral temple in South India is that of the great musician saint Tyagaraja. It is on the banks of the river Kaveri, at a place called Tiruvaiyaru in Thanjavur district of Tamilnadu state. The music festival is celebrated every year in this place in the name, '***Tiyagarajar Aarathanai***'. The most celebrated carnatic music singers and instrumentalists will attend the festival and submit their respect to the saint musician.

MEMORIAL TEMPLES OF THE CHALUKYAS

MEMORIAL TEMPLES OF THE CHĀLUKYĀS

From the sixth century to the middle of the eight century, a great empire of the Chālukyās ruled the entire Deccan comprising Karṅātakā and Āndhra. During their reign the cultural activities like the temple construction was at its high. It was witnessed by their territory, the commingling of several religious and art traditions, the result of which is well reflected in the temples that the Chālukyān monarchs or their nobles raised. The Chālukyās in their inscriptions, proclaim themselves as '***Paramabhagavathas***' and as ardent worshippers of Vishnu. The early Chālukyān rulers , until the time of Vikramaditya, favoured the Vaishnava faith, though they were tolerant to saivism and Jainism. Soon after the accession of Vikramaditya I to the throne , the attitude of the royalty towards the religious sects underwent a definite change. The Amudalapadu and Talamanchi epigraphs mentions the names of Sudarsanacharya and Megacharya, two saiva Lakulísa saints. So does another grant from Nasuri dated A.D.671 referring to Vikramaditya as '***Paramamahesvara***', an ardent worshipper of Śiva, and meditating at the feet of Śri Nagavardhana. Considering these influential Saivacharyas in Āndhra desa, the Pāsupathā cult possibly was a predominant faith. Some other evidence, particularly the one from Bhairavakonda in Karnool district, lends support, for it speaks of Lakulísa as Dandesvara. Some names of the acharyas incised on the walls of the temples at Alampur, notably of Vikramaditya's period, are interesting and they read as '***Sri Saiva mamuni***', '***Sri Kandacharya***', '***Macchripparamahesvaran***'. The predominance of the pāsupathās is also reflected in the iconography of this period, by placing Lakulísa, in the niches of temples .It is probable that a '***math***' was established at Alampur is recorded in A.D.781, during the Chālukyā reign in that area. In addition to these records, an early tenth century record from Pragatguru, in Alampur environs, states the gift to god '***Lakulísa***' thereby confirming the prominence of the pāsupathā cult. Though there is no much inscriptional evidence relating to the other temples of Chālukyās in the same territory (present Āndhra country) the very few label inscriptions that are available suggest the prevalence of the pāsupathā sect. The Kalamukhas became a dominant sect from the ninth century onwards and their '***mathas***' at Alampur and Papanasi wielded great influence. Alampur came to be regarded as the western gateway of Srisaila, a great Kalamukha centre.

Badami, Pattadakkal and Aihole are the three famous places of the Chālukyās still posses the beautiful temples of their period. Aihole is called as the '***Cradle of Indian Temple Architecture***'. It is evidently proved that the tradition of erecting the sepulchral temples was in practice



Sanctum with Linga, Vikramaditya II's Memorial Shrine, B. N. Jalehala.

Hero Stone, B. N. Jalehala.

Lokamadevi and Trilokyamadevi Temples, B. N. Jalehala.

Memorial Shrine, B. N. Jalehala.

during the Chālukyā period, by the inscriptions and edifices. Erecting temples on the burial site itself and at other places also in memory of the deceased .Lingas were consecrated in these temples and gifts were also made for the maintenance of them. We have already seen the inter-link between the pāsupathā or Kalamuka sects of saivism and the erection of memorial temples for the saiva devotees after death. The flourisement of saivism during their reign is supporting the above said inter-link.

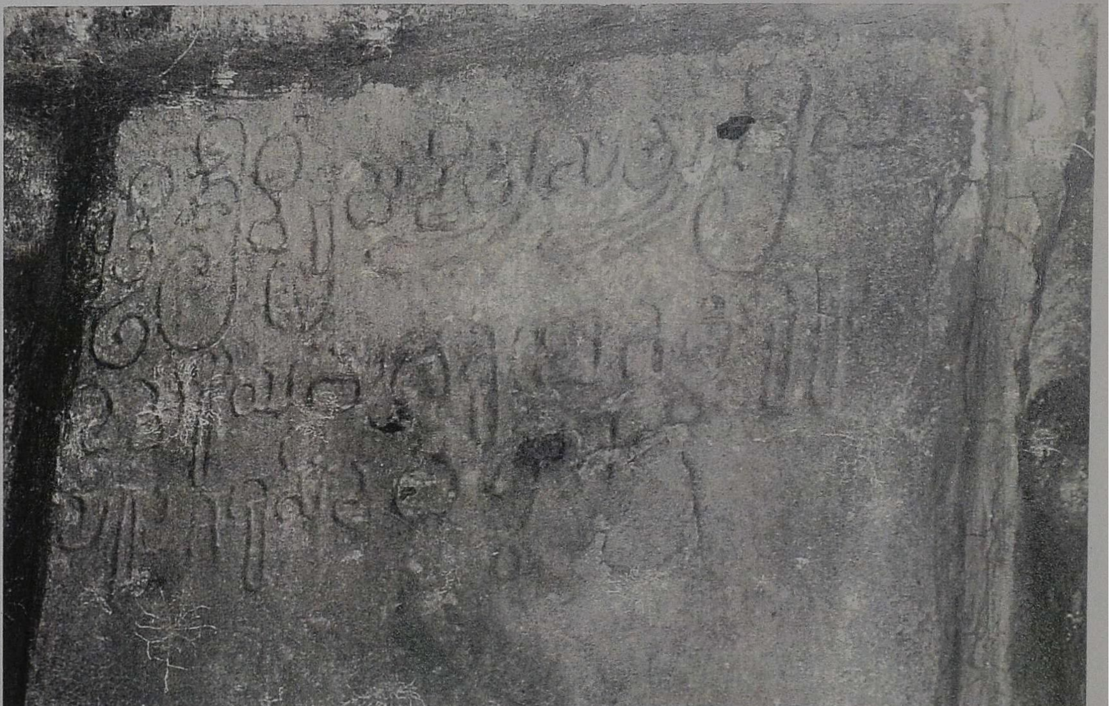
Vikramaditya-II, was a famous king of the Chālukyā dynasty. He accessed the throne as a monarch, in his own right either in December A.D. 733or in January A.D.734. Lokamahadevi and Trilokyamahadevi were two of his queens. They were uteri nary sisters. There are temples bearing the two queens namely, Lokesvara (presently known as Virupaksa temple), and Trilokesvara (presently known as Mallikarjuna) in the present Karnātakā state. The available inscriptions of Kirthivarman II, at Pattadakkal, Which contains historical information on the Vijayesvara and Lokesvara temples which bore the names of the king Vijayaditya and queen Lokamahadevi. Also states that Trilokyamahadevi's great stone temple of '***Trilokyesvara***' was constructed to the north of her elder sister's temple, i.e., Lokeswara temple. It must be pointed out here that there is no evidence whatsoever to say that these two temples were built by the two sisters to commemorate their husband's conquest of Kanchi. It may be assumed that these temples were constructed in honour of the royal personalities or in memory of them by the next rulers.

The death of Vikramaditya-II, has been commemorated in a manner which is of observing interest to the Indian historians. Badra Nayakan Jalehala, is about 5 kilometers west of Pattadakkal. To the west of the village is a '***U***' shaped valley formed by the red sand stone hill range. A thin water fall from a perennial spring adds to the idyllic setting. In this valley, locally called Halegavana kolla ,are a cluster of eleven red sand stone shrines and a large rock shelter. The shrines of different size, have been built at different heights. Of the eleven shrines, the largest one at the bottom of the valley and flanked by two smaller shrines consist of a '***garbagriha***' and an '***ardha mandapa***'. It stands on an '***adhisthana***' but does not have a '***sikara***'. The shrine faces north and the entrance is flanked by two '***dvarapalas***', one on each side with a '***parasol***' each over their heads. The '***sanctum***' has a '***linga***'. As one enters the shrine, to the right of the left side dvarapala is a kannada inscription in three lines which reads with minor orthographical corrections as follows:-

Dvarapala, B. N. Jalehala.

Memorial Shrine, B. N. Jalehala.

General View, Memorial Shrines, B. N. Jalehala.



Inscriptions, B. N. Jalehala.

***Swasti Sri Sri Vikramatitya Satyasraya
Devariya maganu Benamma Karamdada
Paradana kesida dharmavarke***

'Be it well. The illustrious Viktramaditya satyasraya. Benamma, the son of Devariya, made this heavenward vehicle of the casket. May it may be a meritorious deed'.

The conclusion which the above inscription leads to is that on the death of Vikramatitya , his (cremated) mortal remains were placed in a casket and buried at the spot over which the shrine in question was constructed Vikramaditya II, was a youth at the time of his coronation, well below middle age. He was no more after a short reign of a little over a decade, and therefore must have met with a pre mature end.

The site at B. N. Jalehala, has the appearance of a mass cemetery, all the eleven shrines having been perhaps built at the same time. It is not a little significant that just behind the memorial shrine of Vikramaditya, there is a hero stone in three panels. The lowest one depicting three bullocks, two in moving posture and the third lying down. Symbolically representing the journey's end or death. The middle panel depicts a hero and two females being escorted to heaven by a fourth figure . And the top panel, depicts the hero flanked by two females regaling in the heavens. Such memorial slabs with unyoked bullocks have been used from very early times to commemorate merchants or individuals who had died most probably while on the move and as a result of ambuscades. It is possible that Vikramaditya II, his two queens and at least eight more important persons who had accompanied them, fell victims, to such an ambush, and that in their commemoration the sad looking shrines in the deathrecking site were built all at the same time in different size in keeping with their status. Is this be so, the two smaller shrines flanking the tomb shrine of Vikramaditya may be the ones of his queens Lokamahadevi and Trilokyamahadevi.

Though the charters of the Chālukyās normally commence with an invocation to the Boar incarnation of Vishnu, which has misled some scholars to argue that they were staunch Vaishnavites, Vikramaditya I was a great devotee of Śiva, and in the fifth year(A.D.658-59) of his reign he underwent '***Śiva mandala diksha***' under the supervision of a guru named Sudarsanacharya, at the village of Marrura in Āndhra Pradesh. After the initiation ceremony, the emperor gave away the village of Iparungal as '***gurudakshina***' to Sudarsanacharya. Vikramatitya had one more preceptor , Meghacharya, was also an erudite Vedic school. Though

we do not find any memorial temple of his period, there is a temple suspected of the type raised in memory of his daughter-in-law, queen of Vinayaditya, probably constructed by Lokaditya, the other son of Vinayaditya, the already known son Vijayaditya. This temple is the ' *Svarga Bramha*' temple at Alampur.

SVARGA BRAMHA TEMPLE

In the southern territories of the Chālukyān empire, several temples were built under the direct patronage of the Chālukyān monarchs and their nobles. At Alampur, in Āndhrapradesh state, nine temples are situated in a walled enclosure. This temple group is known as Nava Bramha temples. Among the nine temples, the temple named as '*Svarga Bramha*' is believed to be raised in memory of the queen of Vinayaditya the Chālukyā ruler. Vikramaditya was succeeded by Vinayaditya, and he was followed by his son Vijayaditya. Vinayaditya, apart from Vijayaditya, appears to have had another son named Lokaditya who is referred to in an inscription from Alampur(Āndhrapradesh) as '*ela - arasa*', literally the prince. The kannada inscription, which is undated, engraved above the '*dvarapala*' image in the Svarga Bramha temple at Alampur, states that the temple in question was of the queen of Vinayaditya- Pritvivallabha . It says, '*Sri Vinayaditya - Pritvi vallabha - mahadeviyara devakulam*'. The next sentence reveals that the temple was constructed by Lokaditya ,the prince. And Lokaditya's queen granted to the temple the villages of Kolkola, Kurimbala and Kalale as '*devasva*'. The expression '*mahadeviyara devakulam*' may mean either that the temple was built posthumously in her memory or that it was constructed in her honour, even while she was alive.

The way in which Vinayaditya is mentioned in the inscription does not necessarily indicate that he was alive at that time. It is very likely that '*Svargabramha*' temple was built by the prince Lokaditya in memory or in honour of the emperor's queen when he was in charge of the administration of the Alampur region as the deputy of Vijayaditya (A.D.733/34-744/45) the elder brother of him.

The '*Svargabramha*' temple is consists of a '*mukha mandapa*', an '*antarala*' and a '*garbhagriha*'. On the exterior wall of the temple at the eastern side, we see Śiva as Lingodhbhavamurty, Nataraja, Tri puranthaka, Bhikshatanamurthy and the image of Surya. Nandhi and Mahakala are the dvarapalas. The temple base, the '*tulaputha*' exhibits interesting carvings in the rafter ends. One of the niches depicts the '*Krishnayana*' theme. The narration of the story starts with Vasudeva

with infant Krishna with an attendant '***chauri - bearer***'. The '***panchatantra***' stories also depicted in sculptures in this temple.

It is believed that this temple was raised in memory of the queen of Vinayaditya, the Chālukyā ruler. It is evidently proved that Pāsupathā as well as the Kalamukha sects of saivism was popular which spreaded the faith in next birth and stressed the rituals for the salvation of the deceased souls, (erection of Śivalayas etc,.) in this area during the Chālukyān reign.

From the examples given we can conclude that the tradition of constructing memorial shrines was in practice during the Chālukyā reign in South India.

MEMORIAL TEMPLES OF THE GANGAS

MEMORIAL TEMPLES OF THE GANGĀS

Among the two indigenous kingdoms rose in Karnātakā during the middle of the fourth century. The Gangās of Talakkadu is one of them. The dynasty held control of the southern and eastern Karnātakā territories, for a long period extending upto the end of circa 10th century A.D. like the Chālukyās, they were also had Vishnu (Padmanabha) as their family deity.

History left a few evidential temples of sepulchral type of these rulers. Though these rulers were tolerant to all the religions, their personal devotion to brahmanical religion was manifest by their observance of Vedic rituals right from the beginning. Worship of Śiva and Vishnu in various forms was practiced by Gangā kings and other royal personages. They were '*paramamhesvaras*' as well as '*paramabhattarakas*'.

Pāsupathā saivism or Lakulísa pasupatism was patronised from the time of Śivamara -II (A.D. 791-819). The Mogenahalli stone inscription (A.D.987) refers to one pāsupathā saiva saint by name Muvadi Chillukadeva, who was in charge of the temples named '*Śivamaresvara*' and 'Nitimargesvara'. These tow temples perhaps were sepulchral shrines named after the Gangā rulers Śivamara and Nitimarga. Chilluka finds mentioned in another record dated 943 as a reincarnation of Lakulísa, the great pāsupathā. Ascetics were vested with the responsibility of administrating the temples and their upkeep. (E.C. XII 51-28 p 92 Kalamukha saivas who regarded Vedas and Āgamās as their scriptures were also venerated. Rajamalla - II 870 - 907 who renovated the Desesvara temple at Alur (Mysore district) gifted a village to one Netra Śivacharaya, a disciple of Sakari bhataraka who belonged to tiripurahara sect, a branch famous for Kalamukhas. The priest in charge of worship was '*tammadi*'. They were mostly brahmins, but some gorava priests were also known. Basavanahalli record dated in the 6th regnal year of Rajamalla II(A.D.876) mentions one Lakulísa bhatara, a disciple of Srikantha bhatara as a sthanika of Ereyangesvara temple. Land grants were entrusted to the above Srikantha panditha. Ojas were reciting puranas.

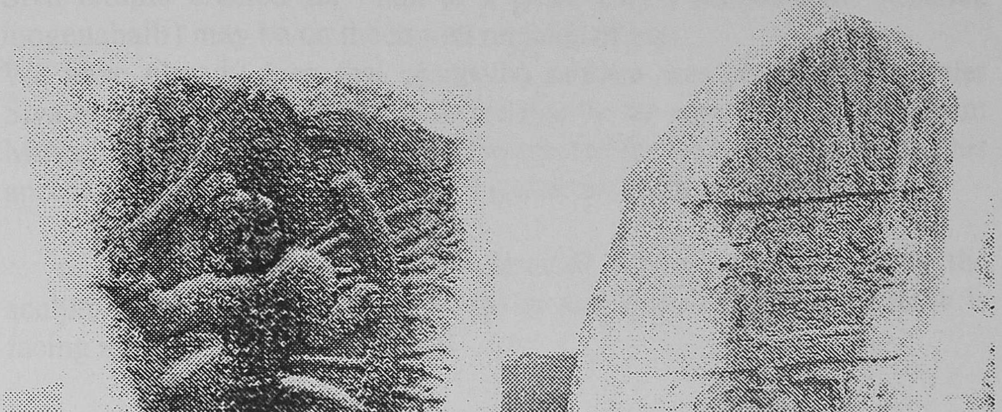
NITIMARGESVARA TEMPLE

Nitimarga- I (A.D. 853-869) of Gangā dynasty bore the title Konganivarma Eregangādeva and Dharma maharajadhiraja, Ranavikrama and permanadi. He was a devout jaina "bhagavad-arhad bhattaraka-

Sivamaresvara Temple - Newly Constructed

Veerabhadra Swamy or Nitimaresvara Temple

Doddahundi: Sallekhana Scene



Hero Stones - Sivamaresvara

charana cinda-gugala madhupayamana-manasha" he performed sallehana (869). The Doddahundi (Mysore) inscribed sculpture now in Bangalore museum is depicting his death scene, while observing the several jaina vow in 869.During Nitimarga II's period, the Nitimargesvara temple and the Śivamaresvara temple was constructed in memory of Nitimarga I and Śivamara I.

It is peculiar that Nitimarga was a staunch jaina, who ended his life by sallehana. Sculptor evidence for this quoted above but there was a Śiva temple erected for him at a place called Mogenahalli (Chande mogenahalli) may be on the mortal remains of him.
We have already seen that pāsupathā saivism was patronised by ruler Śiva mara II . So it can be concluded that by the advice of Lakulísa saint Muvadi chillukkadeva, he could have erected the memorial temple for his ancestors to make their sin salvated and attained the place of Śiva.

This temple is now got modernised but traces are found by the sculptures and plenty of hero stones in that area. The present temple is facing north , may be the original.

ŚIVAMARESVARA TEMPLE

Śivamaresvara temple is located at the village Hongana halli, near Bangalore. Dr I.K.Sharma, in his '*Temples of Gangās*' suspects that this temple might perhaps be a sepulchral temple raised after the death of the ruler. And a linga pratishta was also caused by his name as Śivamaresvara.
According to the inscription, the Śivamaresvara temple was erected during the reign of Śivamara II. The Mogenahalli stone inscription Śivamara refers to one pāsupathā a Saiva by name Muvadi Chillukkadeva who was in charge of the temples named Śivamaresvara and Nitimargesvara. This temple also modernised and could not find any trace of the old one.

THE DADIGESVARA TEMPLE

The village Kodihalli, is at a distance of 4km, south of the village Dadiga in Nagamāngala taluk of Mandya district of Karnātakā state.

Dadiga is believed to be one of the founder of the Gangā dynasty. He is the father of Madhava I (380-400) the Gangā ruler, and a memorial

temple raised over the mortal remains of him. At present only brick remains are there. A linga was also consecrated in the temple.

The Dadigesvara temple in the midst of the village though largely a modern renovation with stone slabs, revealed its original foundation in brick, consisting of a rectangular shrine of bigger dimension measuring 9*6m. The linga and padma-pitha are present in the sanctum.

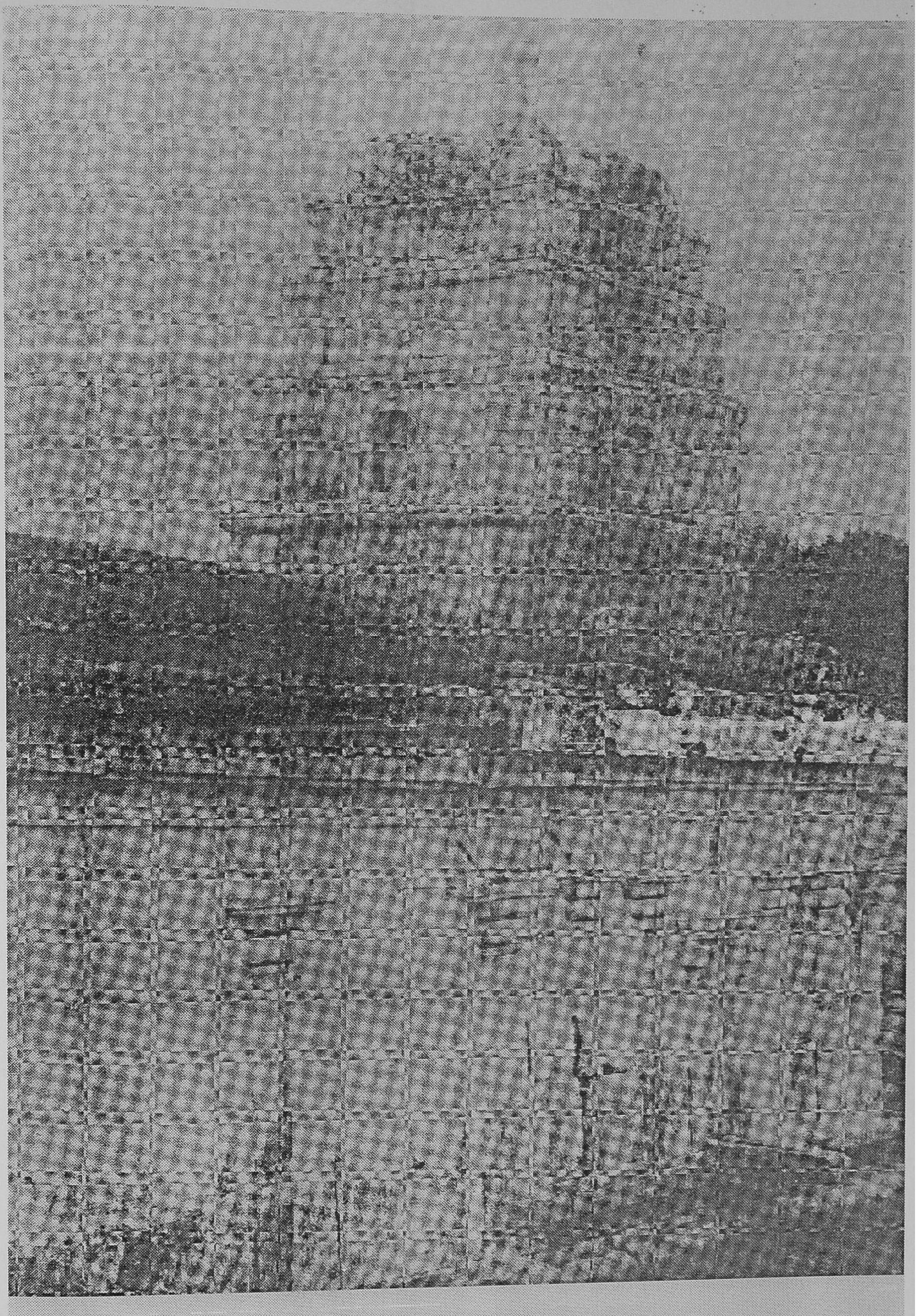
From the name of the temples as also the nature of the older foundation, it appears that the brick shrine was raised in the memory of the Gangā king Dadiga. The brick phase could be assigned to the mid seventh century A.D.

NAGARESVARA TEMPLE

A most notable example is a hero stone (originally obtained from the premises of nagaresvara temple at Begur) now in Bangalore museum. It portrays a war scene that took place at Tumbepadi between Nagathara, a Gangā chief of Nitimargaereyappa (853 - 870) the Gangā ruler and Ayyappa, son of Nolamba chief Viramahendra (Archaeological survey of Mysore - a.r. 1934, pp 9-11) though Nagathara won the war, he died in the encounter, along with his elephant and a memorial was raised. Three scenes are portrayed on this the upper panel depicts dancing nymphs, Indra seated on throne in the Svargaloga. The mid scene has cavalry on hoses Nagathara on horse is holding a big sword in a striking posture. Ayyappa is on the caparisoned elephant. The lower scene has foot soldiers of both the rival parties another hero stone within this complex portrays the death of Nagathara's house manager Pegura. Several sculptured slabs of this class were found within the fallen portions of the prakara wall and one such sculptured slab has on inscription carved over its raised border the sculpture depicts a hero seated on a couch centrally and flanked by dancing ladies below. In a smaller panel the very same hero is shown standing with the sword in right hand, body pierced with arrow from all sides. The side register shows a hero fighting with bow and arrows. Lower part has a frieze of animals indicating the Gograhana.

The three paneled hero stone reminds the hero stone found at B. N. Jalehala where the eleven sepulchral shrines of Vikramditya II, his two queens and nine of his royal personalities are located.

This temple Nagaresvara might have been built for the memory of Nagaratara and named after him as Nagaratesvara. In due course the name could have been corrupted into nagesvara.



Varuna – Mahalingeshwarar Temple

Without any supporting epigraphy, we can only assume the possibilities (with the sculptural depictions and comparison of other memorial shrines) of the temple belonging to the memorial type of monuments - Nitimarga its period late phase of Gangā architecture.

Varuna is a place located at the east of Mysore, with a difference of 11 kms. The Mahadevesvara alias Mahalingesvara temple at Varuna, housing a Śivalinga named Bhutesvara existed perhaps from the times of Sripurusha (Epigraphica Carnatica vol V (1976) my 182 pp 298-299) and enjoyed the patronage of some Chālukyā feudatories as well during circa 10th century A.D (E.C. vol V, my. 167,168,169 pp 293-294). According to the information in the inscription it appears to be a camping place for the army.

The inscriptions at the lower part are datable to 10th century A.D. and refer to a Mahasamanta Narasimha of the Chālukyān family who was the father of Arakesari and patron of Dipampa, the great Kannada poet (E.C. vol V my 167 293,820). A war scene is depicted on the wider terminal panel, while the central frame depicts a seated king with folded hands flanked by attendance. The bun-type hair do is typical of the Gangā hero-stones as known from hirengundakal. The king represented here was regarded as Butuga and the temple was named after him as Butugesvara (Archaeological Survey of Mysore, annual report for the year 1940, pp 21-23) and the object of worship was a Linga under the torana. Several inscribed stones refer to the grants made to the temple. (E.C. vol V my 168-169 pp 293-95)

There is no specific inscription stating this temple as a memorial temple or dedicated to Bhutaka, the Gangā ruler but the depiction of the war seen and name of the Linga, tempt us to include this temple with the list of memorial temples.

The village Ramenahalli, north of Śivamarapattana in Malur taluk of Kolar district of Karnātakā, is housing a memorial chamber at the west of an inscribed boulder. The sculptured hero-stone here depicts a soldier fighting with a tiger is noteworthy. The inscription on the bolder refers to the gifts of gold to Pulikrukki bhatara and Isalappagudi. The memorial chamber might be the temple mentioned as Isalappagudi.

MEMORIAL TEMPLES OF THE CHOLAS

MEMORIAL TEMPLES OF THE CHOLAS

During Chola period, according to tradition, there were in the ninth century A.D., 275 Śiva temples and108vaishnava temples in Tamilnadu. Of these , 230 temples were in Chola desa. This will prove that the Cholas were the greatest temple builders of south India, perhaps in the whole India. Most of the Chola rulers were staunch saivists. Saivism was at its peak and the saiva Āgamās were given importance in the temple building as well as temple administration. Saivism was followed by the majority of the people.

History witnesses that the Chola rulers of south India were the followers of saivism. According to the saiva Āgamās the persons who got '***Śiva diksha***' from the guru of any of the four sects of saivism must be buried after death, not to be cremated. There must be a '***samadhi***' erected on the burial place and a linga should be placed on it. Regular worship and food offerings to the brahmins, chanting the devaram hymns on auspicious days etc., must be followed in the memorial temples where lingas consecrated. As we have already seen the Chola rulers who were very much interested in temple building and in the saiva religion, constructed memorial temples in the burial places of their ancestors and consecrated lingas in them. They have arranged gift of lands and finance for the worship and rituals conducted regularly in the temples. Right from Paranthaka-I's period we see these type of temples in many places in the then Chola territory.

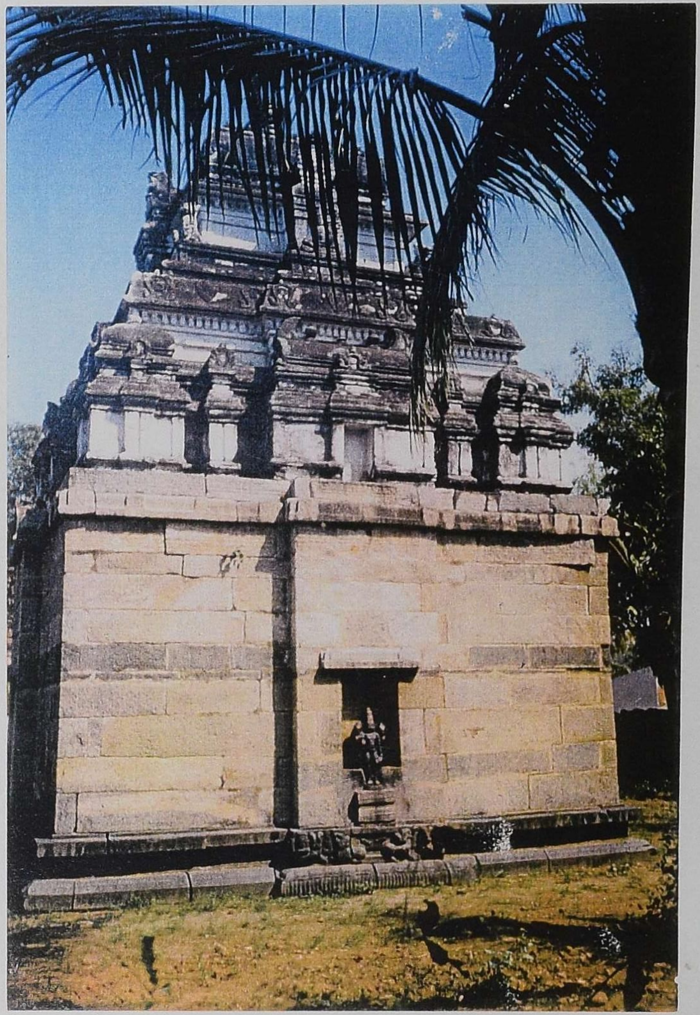
ADITYESVARAM ALIAS KODANDARAMESVARAM

Among the early Chola rulers Parantaka-I was the greatest conquerer. He is equally famous for his religious activities. He was a staunch devotee of lord Śiva. The Tiruvalangadu copper plates of Chola period describes him as a, '***bee at the lotus feet of lord Śiva the Paranthaka***'. He covered the Chidambaram Natarajar temple with pure gold and gained the name ,'***pon veintha perumal***'. During the glorious reign of Paranthaka-I, the art of peace received as much attention as deeds of war in particular, old brick temples were rebuilt of stone and enriched, and new ones in stone came to be constructed. Paranthaka-I, constructed a memorial temple for his father Aditya Chola who died at Thondaiman Arrur which is called as '***Kodandaramaesvaram***' alias '***Adityesvaram***'. It is proved by the by the following inscriptional detail that Aditya Chola had the other name also, i.e.,Kodanda rama.

Temple Complex, Kodandarameswaram Temple, Tondaimanadu.

Entrance Gopuram,
Kodandarameswaram Temple, Tondaimanadu.

Dakshinamurthy (Niche Figure),
Kodandarameswaram Temple, Tondaimanadu.



Vishnu (Niche Figure),
Kodandarameswaram Temple, Tondaimanadu.

At Thirumalpuram, there is an inscription of the 14th year and 21st day of a '***Konerinmai kondan***', which should be ascribed to Uttama Chola and which mentions an earlier gift of the 21st year of '***Tondaiman Arrurttunjina udaiyar***' (who died at Thondaiman Arrur) i.e., Aditya-I. Tondaimanad is about 6 miles from Kalahasti in the Chittoor district of Andrapradesh. It was formerly called as Tondaiman Arrur(or Perarrur) in Arrur nadu, a division of Thiuvengadakkottam in Thondainadu. Here is the temple called Kodandarameswaram or Adityeswaram. This is said to be a pallipadai, a memorial sepulchral (or tomb) temple, erected in honour of Kodandarama. The Kanyakumari inscription of Vira Rajendra says ' ***the son of Vijayalaya was Aditya varman, better known as Kodandarama***'. Thus it is made clear that Aditya-I had such a surname; the temple is thus named after both the names

There is an inscription of the 34th year of Paranthaka-I on the north base of the central shrine of the '***Kodandaramesvaram***' temple whose opening lines are: "***Madurai konda kopparakesari paramarkku yandu 34-avadu Thiruvenkadakkottathu Arrur nattu Thondaiman perrarrur sabaiyomum nagarathomum Pallippadai Vagiswara panditha battarar Sri kodandarameswaram ahiya Adityeswarathu alvarkku purattasi thingal tirukkettai mudal edir elun nalum tirunakshatramakiya tiruchadayathanrum tiru urchavam seyvatharkkum bholanathukkum pallipadai vagiswara pndita pattarar thondaiman arrur sabaiyomum nagarathomum vali sandhirathithavar iddharmam seyvathaga engal vali vaitha pon suttu vettichedukkoduthu tippokki urkarchemmai mudal nurrain kalanjum Vagisvara pandithan enum pundimpinal nirattalavu tu-nel nalayirak kadiyum...***". This tells us that the name of this temple is "Pallipadai Vagisvara Panditha Bhattarar Sri Kodandarameswaram alias Adityesvara alvar temple", and records endowments of 105 kalanju of gold together with a net annual income of 4,000 kadi of paddy. Details of the expenditure against this income are also recorded later on in the inscription. These include provision for the supply of offerings, vegetables, curds, ghee, salt and other requirements for the celebration of a seven day festival lasting from the asterism of kettai to that of sadayam (the latter being the natal star of the king) in the month of Purattasi, for a feeding house and for feeding, on the seven days of the festival, a thousand persons, tapasvins of all sects including Mahavirathins, brahmans and devotees of various classes. The sabha and the nagaram of Tondaiman Perarrur agreed to maintain this charity in favour of the Pallipadai Vagisvara Panditha Bhattarar temple, as requested by the Mahavirathins of Adityesvaram, the ganapperumakkal of the tiru Panrisvarattu Prithvi Vitangar temple of the neighboring town of Kaveripakkam and the pan- mahesvaras.

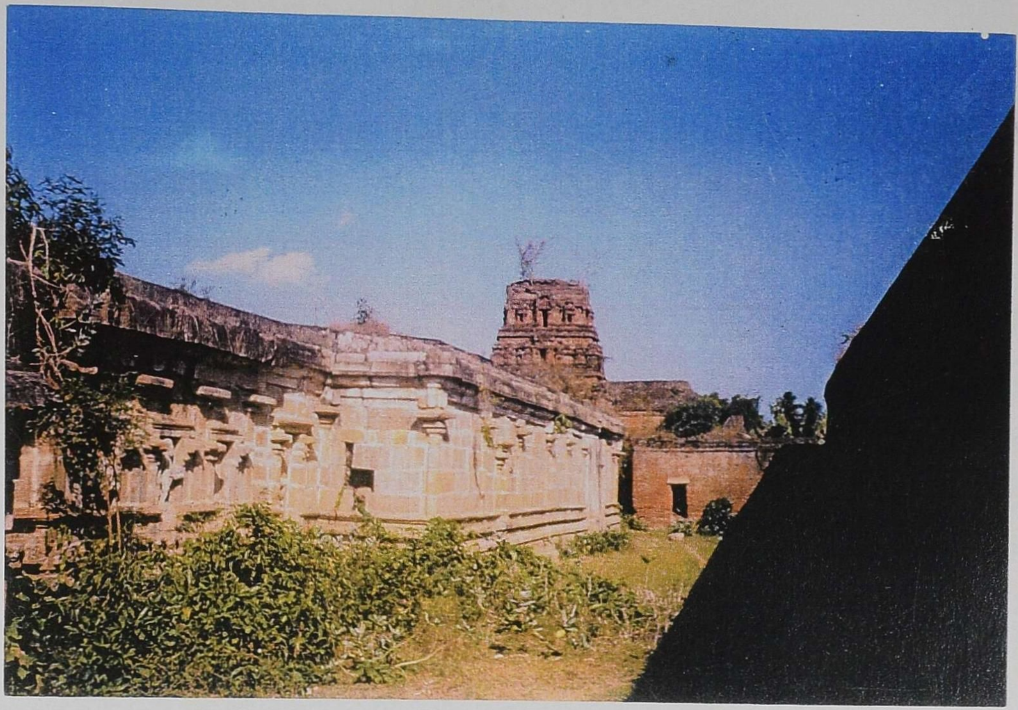
Thus we conclude that this is a temple named after Aditya-I, being in fact a pallipadai, a memorial tomb temple built over the mortal remains of this king who died at this place: hence it was that he came to be called after his demise '***Thondaiman arrurttunjina udaiyar***' as described in the Tirumalpuram inscription. It was built by Parantaka-I sometime before his 34th year as a tangible expression of the filial piety of a dutiful son.

It is to be noted that the administration of the temple was given to the pāsupathā pandithas. It proves that the pāsupathā sect of saivism was flourished during that time, and it emphasized the doctrine of rebirth. As we have already seen that they believed that Śiva himself will enter into the dead body of the saiva devotee. The memorial temples were erected especially for the saiva devotees who met with early or premature death. To the salvation of their soul and help them to reach the feet of Śiva, and to get merged with Śiva himself, they trusted that the rituals of constructing the temples on the burial sites and performing '***poojas***' regularly.

PANCHAVAN MADEVI ISVARAM

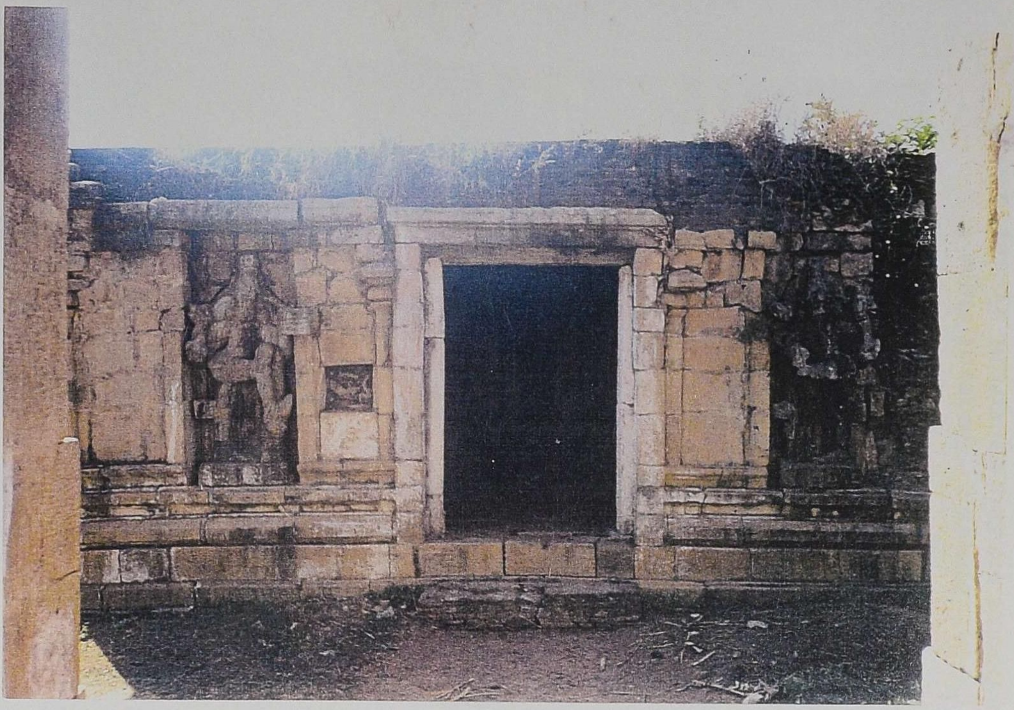
The hamlet of Ramanathankoyil is about 2 kms south-west of the village of pattisvaram and falls within the revenue jurisdiction of that village. The local name for the site where the temple is located is called kolait-tidal. Pattisvaram, Ramanathankoyil, Palaiyarai, Tiruchchattimurram and Darasuram were important chola centres lying close to one another. There is a siva temple at Ramanathankoyil which is called Mahadevar temple. The temple faces east on either side of the entrance to the central shrine there is fine Dvarapala sculpture.

An inscription of the seventh year of Rajendra I (ARE 271 of 1927) found here, mentions a gift of land for worship and offerings, by the king and queen of him made to " the Mahadevar of Panchavan Mahadevi Isvaram, built as a pallippadai at Palaiyaru alias Mudikoda Cholapuram ".



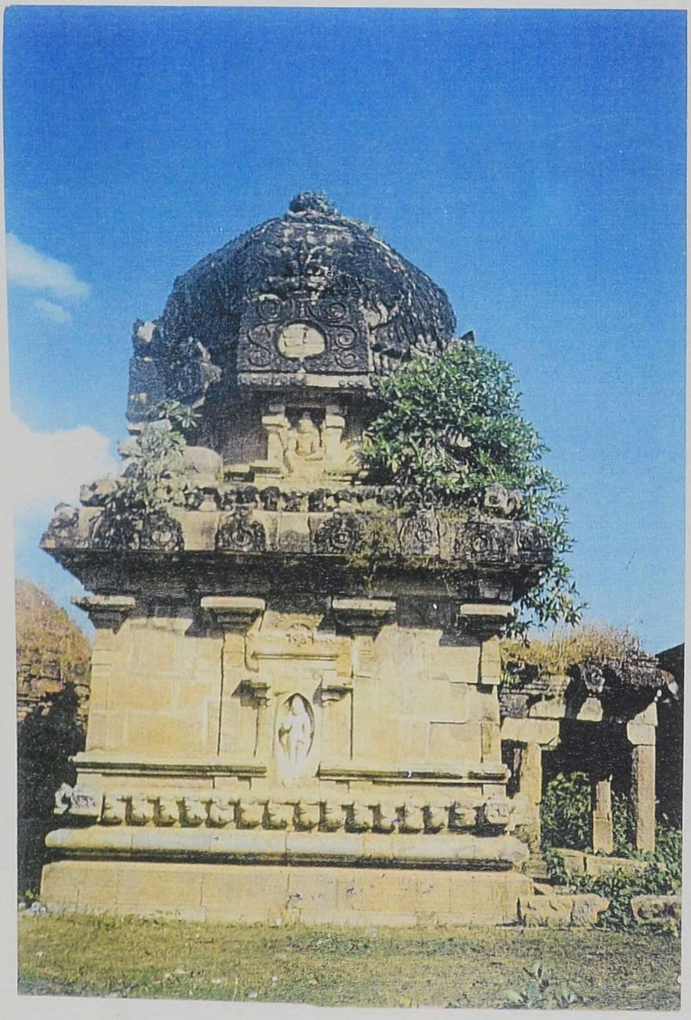
General View, Panchavan madevi eswaram, Patteeswaram.

Loose Sculptures, Panchavan madevi eswaram, Patteeswaram.

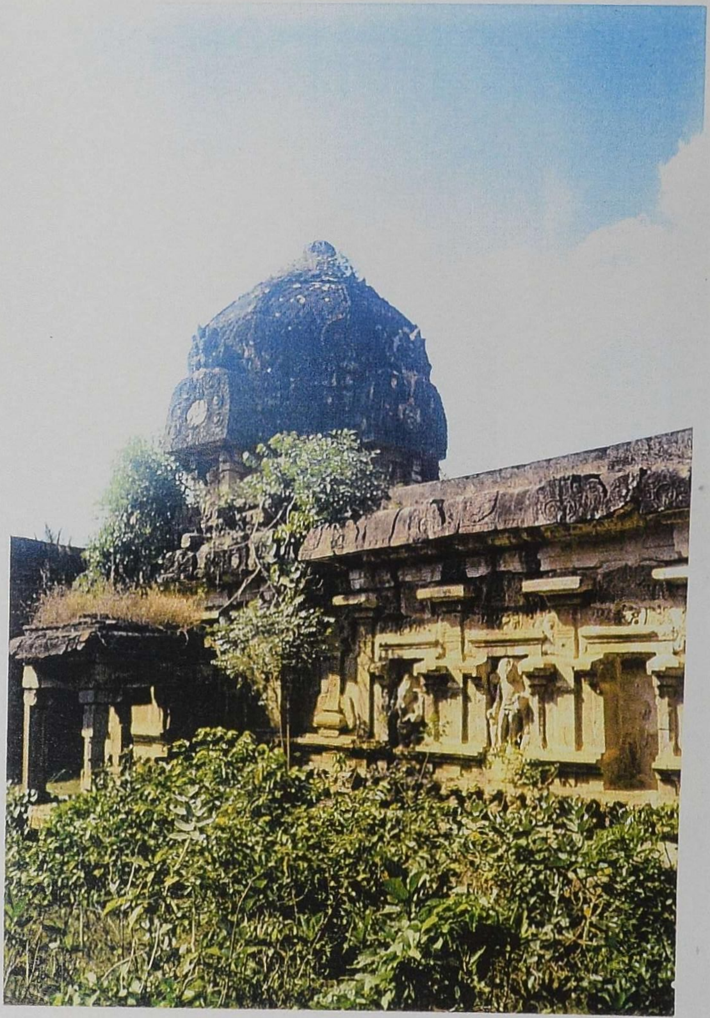


Dvarapalas, Panchavan madevi eswaram, Patteeswaram.

Garbhagriha, Panchavan madevi eswaram, Patteeswaram.



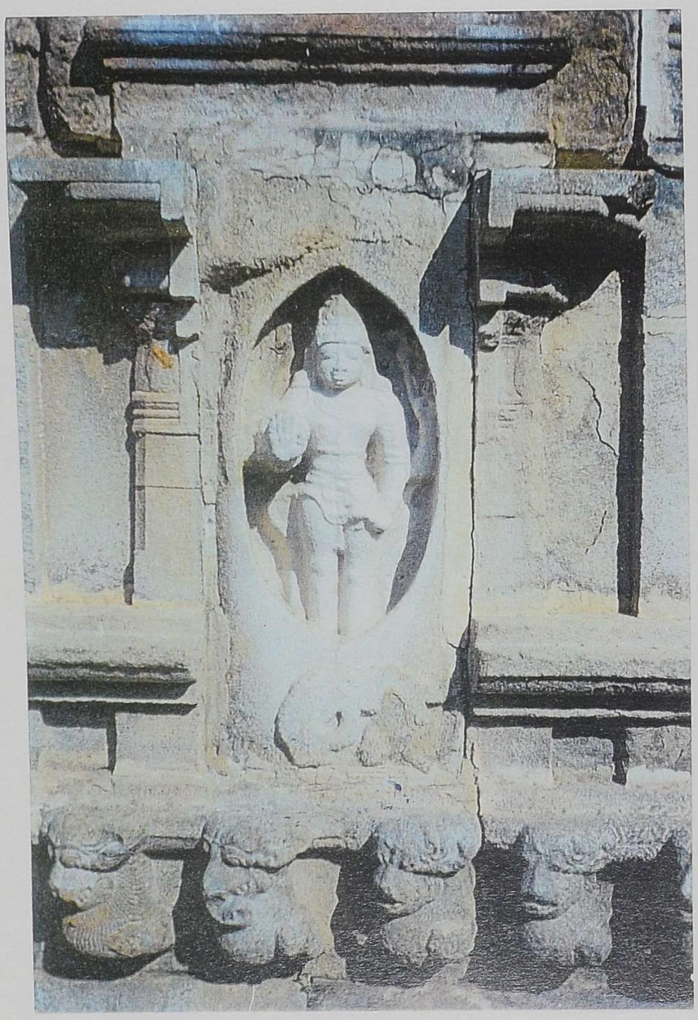
Vimana – Backside
Panchavan madevi eswaram, Patteeswaram.



Vimana – General View
Panchavan madevi eswaram, Patteeswaram.

Dakshinamurthy (Southside Niche Figure),
Panchavan madevi eswaram, Patteeswaram.

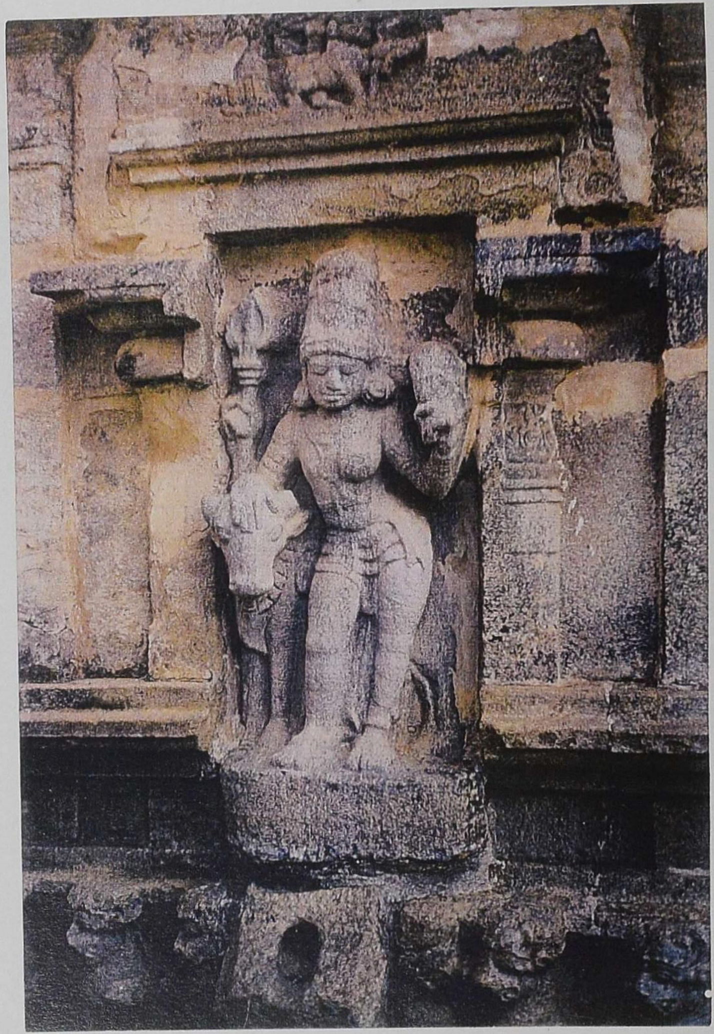
Dvarapala (Sanctum),
Panchavan madevi eswaram, Patteeswaram.



Lingodbhavar (Backside Niche Figure), Panchavan madevi eswaram, Patteeswaram.

Bramha (Northern side Niche Figure), Panchavan madevi eswaram, Patteeswaram.

Durga (Niche Figure),
Panchavan madevi eswaram, Patteeswaram.



Arthanareeswarar (Niche Figure),
Panchavan madevi eswaram, Patteeswaram.

Inscriptions,
Panchavan madevi eswaram, Patteeswaram.

During the Middle chola period two chola queens bore the name Panchavan Mahadevi: one of them was a queen of Rajaraja I, and the other of Rajendra I. Parakesari Uttama Chola also had a queen of that name. While Rajendra I's queen and Uttama Chola's queen were mentioned only in few inscriptions, Rajaraja I's queen got mentioned in several inscriptions and famous for her religious activities. In view of many acts of devotion attributed to the queen of Panchavan Madevi of Rajaraja I it is highly probable that the pallipadai erected over her mortal remains. Though there is no foundation inscription revealing its date or builder, it is likely that it was erected by Rajendra I's himself in homage to the saintly character of his step mother.

The south wall of the cental shrine contains fine sculptures of Bhikshatanar, Ganesa, and Dakshinamurti; Brahma, Durga, Ardhanari and Gangadharar are on the north wall, and Lingodbhavar is in the west. There are loose sculptures of Chandesarar, Bhairavar and Chandreasekharar lying in the mandapa. The lingam in the sanctum is fluted, reminiscent of the Pallava Rajasimha tradition.

In any event, this temple is unqiue as the only pallippadai known to be erected in honour of a queen. The ARE for 1926-27 states that "some interested hand has attempted to erase the word pallippadai; nevertheless, the word can be clearly traced in the inscription".

The above inscription of Rajendra I found on the north, west and south sections of the garbhagriha and ardhamandapa walls, also makes mention of the mathadhipati Lakulisvara Pandita who supervised the affairs of the temple in collaboration with " Venkatan Kovandai of Maruthur in Serrur kurram, a division of Kshatriyasikhamani valanadu". We can see, in the inscription at Tiruvorriyur, the hold which the Lakulisa and Somas Siddhanta cults had over the Rajendra I in particular.

GANDARATHITYAM

The sepulchral temples were usually raised on the mortal remains of the deceased . But at times they were raised in some other place other than the exact burial site and dedicated to the memory of the ancestor. The best example for this category is the Śiva temple constructed by Sembiyan madevi, the Chola queen during her son Uttama Chola's reign, and dedicated to her deceased husband. The temple was named as Gandaratityam.

Rajakesari Gandaratitya was the son of Paranthaka-I who ascended the throne after the death of Rajadityā at Takkolam. He is a staunch saivist; he is the author of '***Tiruvisaippa***'. He seems to have had a scholarly and spiritual bent of mind. The epithet applied to him '***merkiruntarulinadevar***' would suggest that he perhaps did penance and fasted unto death in order to gain final emancipation from worldly bonds. His son was Madurantaka Uttama Chola . " The queen of Gandaratitya, and the mother of Uttama Chola was Paranthakan madevi alias Sembiyan Mahadeviyar. Widowed early in her life, she dedicated her life to religious activities. She devoted her lifetime and wealth in constructing new temples and renovating the old temples. At Konerirajapuram, in Tamilnadu she constructed a temple in memory of her deceased husband, Gandaratitya. Konerirajapuram is about 13 miles on the road from Kumbakonam to Karaikkal.The existence of an ancient temple at Konerirajapuram can be inferred from the devaram hymns of Appar of the 7th century A.D. Appar calls this place Tirunallam and the lord here 'Umaikku-nallavan'. He who is dear to Uma.Local legends say that the temple was called bhumisvaram, as it was believed to have been originally built by bhumidevi under instructions from Mahavishnu. It is said that a king called Pururava had his leprosy cured, and so, as an act of thanksgiving, he gilded the vimana of the temple with Gold. He also instituted a festival on the full moon day of vaikasi. On the south wall of the central shrine, there is an inscription below some sculptures representing Gandaraditya worshipping the linga. The text reads as follows :

'Svasti sri Gandaraditta devar deviyar madevadigalar sri Sembiyan ma deviyar tammudaiya tirumaganar sri madhurantaka devarana sri Uttama solan tiru rajayam seyaadarula nirka t-tammudaiyar sri Gandaraditta devar tirunamattal tiru nallam udaiyarkkuttirukkarrali elundarulivittu ittiruk karraliyileye tirunallam udaiyarait-trivadit-to-lu kinraraha elundaruli vitta sri Gandaraditta devar ivar'.

'Hail prosperity! Madevadigalar alias the glorious Sembiyan madeviyar, queen of Gandarāditya devar, constructed, in the sacred name of her husband, viz. the glorious Gandarāditya devar a stone temple to the lord i.e. the god of Tirunallam at the time when her illustrious son i.e. the glorious Madhurantaka deva alias the glorious Uttama Chola, was graciously ruling. This is the image of the glorious Gandarāditya deva, which was caused to be made in this sacred stone temple in the posture of worshipping the sacred feet of the lord the god of Tirunallam.

This stone temple should have come into existence sometime before the 3rd year of Uttama Chola and been named Gandaradittam as a local Inscription refers to a grant of land for a flower garden in that year an inscription of the 6th year mentions a grant of land for a perpetual lamp to the shrine of Adityesvaram udaiyar in this temple. there is an important inscription of the 8th year 151st day of Uttama Chola (635 of 1909) mentions that Sembiyan mahadevi had built the stone temple at Tirunallam, and that she made, a gift for a flower garden called Gandaradittam and other garden Nandavanappuram.

Sembiyan mahadevi desired to increase the scale of expenses of the god and to provide a feeding house sala to feed 25 brahmans for the merit of her husband. Accordingly, the king issued an order.

It was further resented that these additions to the temple – income were still found insufficient, and an additional grant of 12 veli of land yielding an income of 1590 kalams of paddy in the village of Ilanalam in vennadu, was ordered to be granted as a devadana gift of land to the temple and salabhoga land-gift to a feeding house. While the king was in his camp at Karaikkattuppanaiyur in his 8th year 143rd day, he was pleased to issue an order foregoing an income of 3 kalanju and odd of gold, and 39 kalams of panchavara paddy due to him from Tirunallam. The excess income of paddy from the village of Ilanalam was to be used to feed 15 additional brahmans making the total 40 and to maintain a camphor lamp and a perpetual lamp.

Various food offerings to the gods, sandal paste, incense, lamps, details of expenses in connection with the sri-bali ceremony held on the day of jyeshtha, the natal star of Sembiyan mahadevi, feeding brahmans and of worshippers during the festivals of margali tiuvadirai and vaigasi visakam; the wages of persons

These items are elaborately described in this inscription. This gives us a glimpse of the part played by temples in the day to day life of the

people and how they promoted the material and spiritual welfare of the people. What a noble service the temple had played in the past.

An inscription of the 5th year of Rajendra I refers to the third year of the king's reign and to a gift by alvar parantakan who is said to have been then living in the palace at palaiyaru near Kumbakonam 639 of 1909. she is another member of the family of the early Chola rulers who was equally devoted to temple-building activities and to the fostering of charitable endowments. In the 6th year of Rajendra I there is provision made for the singing of tiruppadiyam in the temple; and an inscription of his 7th year provides for the beating of drums, and the blowing of horns and conches during the early morning service; queen Arindavan mahadevi set up an image of kshetrapala in his 17th year 632 of 1909.

The existence in this place of a Vishnu temple named after Uttama Chola, Uttama Chola vinnagar alvar can be inferred from two inscriptions of the 33rd and 35th years of Rajadhiraja I (655 and 656 of 1909).

In an inscription of the 7th year of Rajendra II this temple is called Madhurantakisvaram udaiyar 634 of 1909 and 633 also, perhaps named after the daughter of Rajendra I; and in an inscription of his 11th year, the deity is called Umaikkunallar. He who is dear to Uma in consonance with the original name in the devaram hymns.

The temple faces the west. The garbhagriha, the antarala and an ardhamandapa were present. The basement has plain mouldings. The central devakoshta in the east has two short and two tall pilasters surmounted by a makara-torana. It has a figure of gajalakshmi in the centre. In the outer walls of the garbhagriha, there are devakoshtas of brahma in the north, lingodbhavar in the east, and dakshinamurti in the south. In the area covered by the ardhamandapa we have sculptures of natesa with kali and rishabharudha with nandi, vishnu and brahma, ganesa and agastya on the south side; and bhikshatanamurti, durga and ardhanarisvarar on the north side. The present sikhara is a later structure. It is eight-sided and curvilinear. There is mukhamandapa measuring 38 feet 8 inches 10.3 m by 33 feet 8 inches 11.9 m. perhaps this is the pugalabharana mandapa referred to in an inscription of Kulottunga III. There is a covered verandah standing on pillar and running around the garbhagriha, the antarala and the ardhamandapa. This is called in the local inscription tirunadai maligai.

This is a fully developed early Chola temple and one of the most well preserved of those that belong to the age of Uttama Chola. . It also

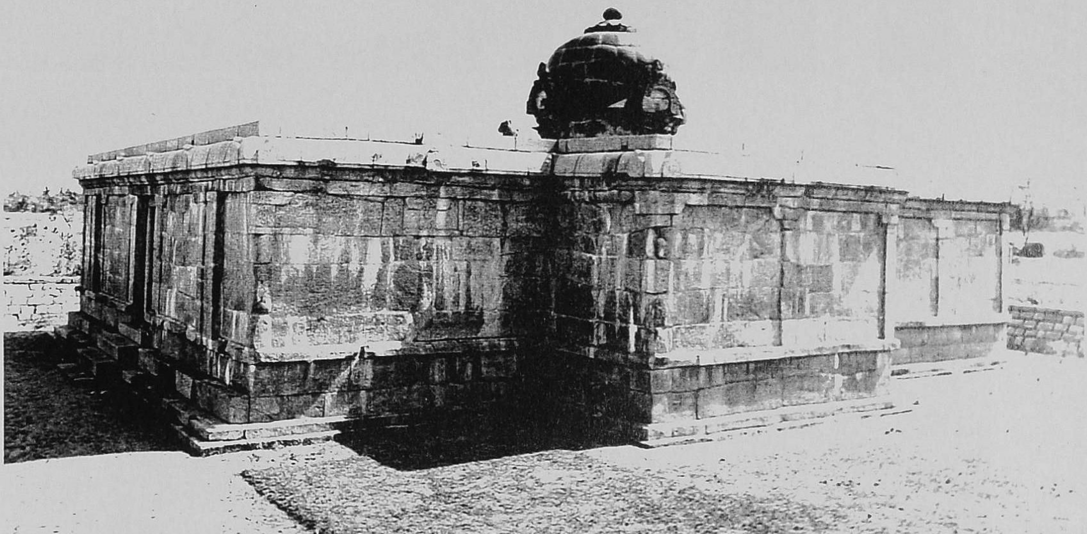
contains the portraits of the king, the queen and the builder of the temple with their names. It is peculiar that the same temple was named after many personalities at various times, but the continuous grants proves that the temple was given more importance throughout the Chola reign. We can see that the agamic rules were followed in the temple administration, i.e., the regular offerings to the gods, to the devotees, the chanting of Devaram hymns, etc,.

ARINJIGAIESVARAM (CHOLISVARAM)

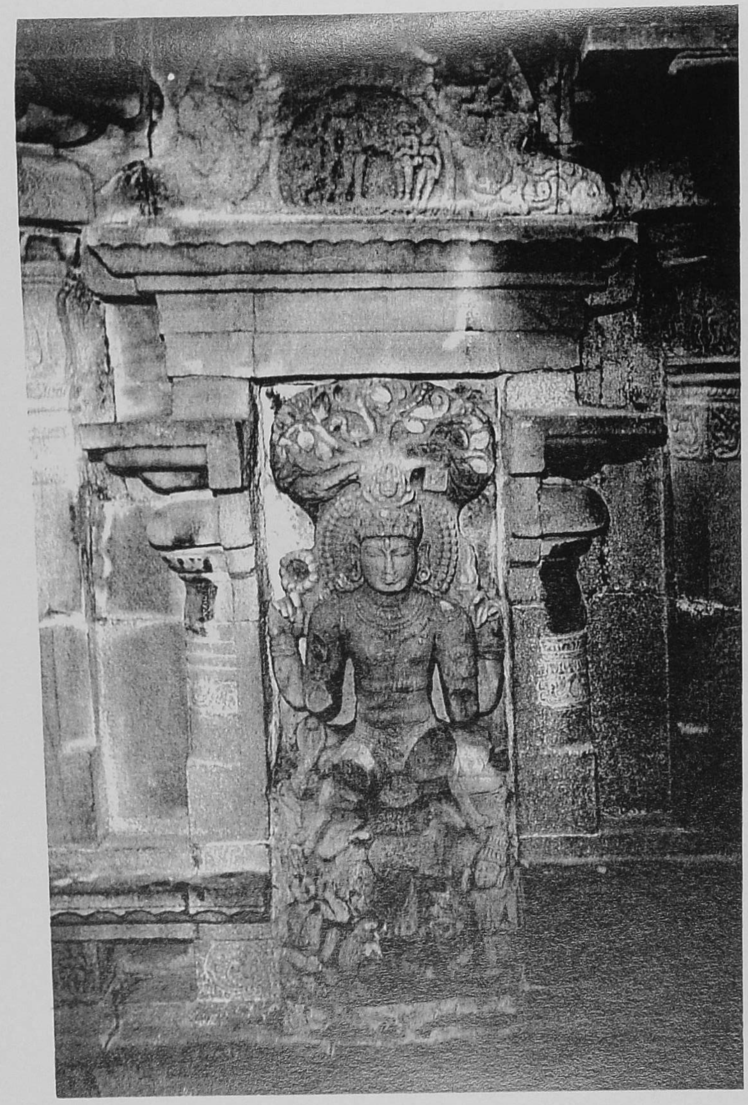
Rājarāja-I was the famous ruler among all the Chola rulers. He is highly respected for his marvelous construction of '*The Big Temple*' at Tanjavur. He himself constructed many temples during his reign and encouraged his sister Kundavai to involve herself in temple construction. There are plenty of existing examples for this. Rājarāja also constructed memorial temples for his father and grandfather too. Arinjigai or Arinjaya, was the grandfather of Rājarajā-I and a contemporary record pays him a great tribute as one," who possessed keen intelligence, who was the beloved(of the goddess) of wealth, who was the god of Death to his enemies and whose greatness was accompanied by virtuous character and good qualities". He might have fell fighting in or near Melpadi village of North Arcot district, Tamilnadu state. Rājarāja-I constructed a memorial temple for him at this place, which is called as '***Arinjigaiesvaram***'. No wonder that Rājarajā wanted to perpetuate his memory by building this memorial to his illustrious ancestor.

Melpadi is situated 16 miles(25.60 km) southwest of Chittoor in North Arcot district of Tamilnadu state. It is situated on the bank of the river ponni and the word '***aru***' in tamil means river. Melpadi is mentioned in the inscriptions as '***Arrur***' i.e., the village situated on the bank of a river. According to the inscriptions of Rājarajā-I (no.101 of 1921) the city Melpadi alias Viranarayanapuram was changed into Rajasrayapuram named after a surname of Rājarajā-I. It further explains sometime before his 29th year(A.D1014) he constructed a temple as a pallipadai or memorial to his grandfather Arinjigai called Arinjigaiesvaram at Melpadi where the mortal remains of Arinjigai were buried(86 of 1889 and SII, vol.III, no 17)
.Here is the relevant extract;-

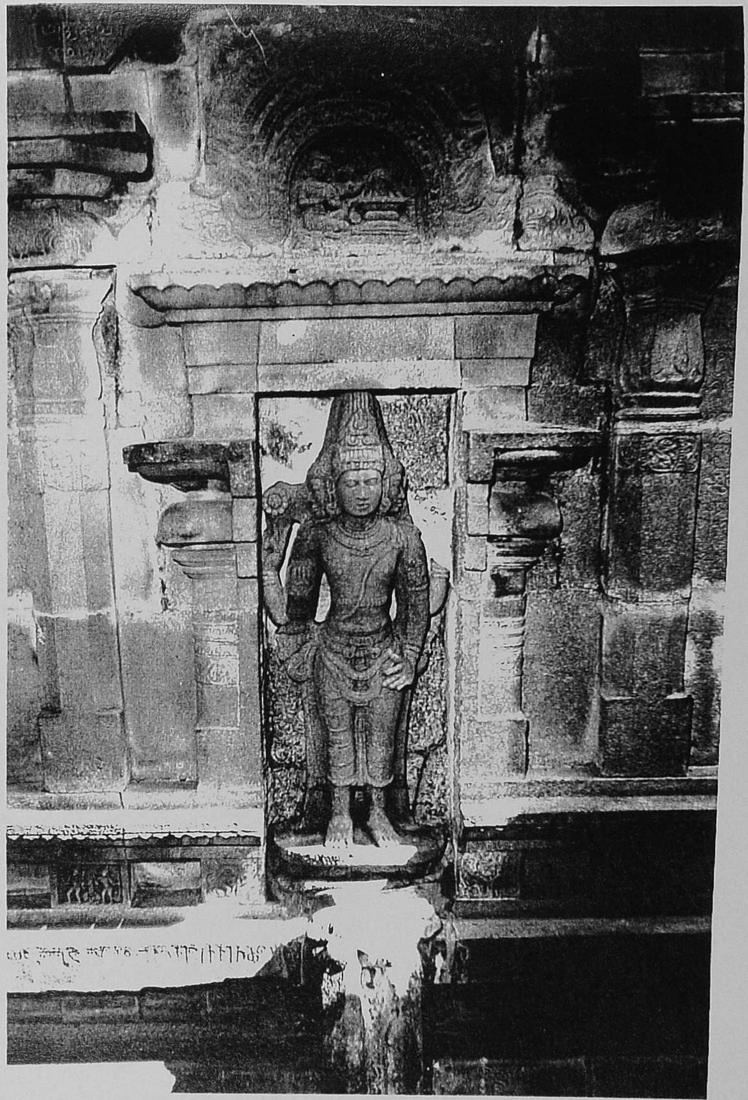
"Sri Koraja-raja-Rajakesari varmarana Sri Rājarajā devarkku 29 avadu Jayankonda Sola mndalathu perumpanappadi-Tu- nattu Merpadiyana Rajasraya purattu Arrurttunjina devarkku pallipadaiyaha Udaiyar Sri Rājarajādevar eduppitharulina Ttiruvarinjiswarattu



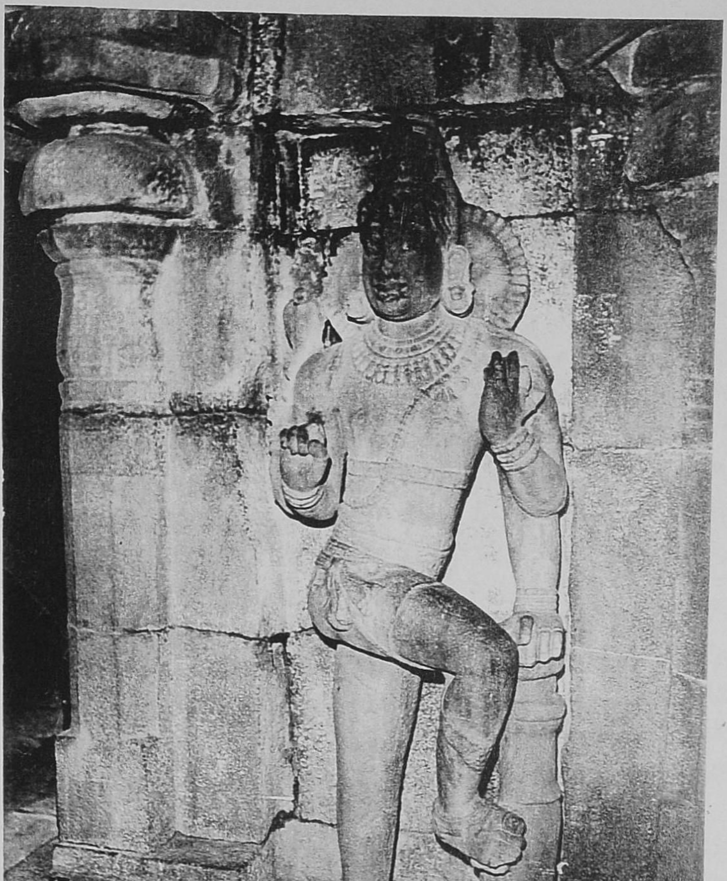
General View, Arinjigaieswaram, Melpadi.



Dakshinamurthy,(Niche Figure),
Arinjigaieswaram, Melpadi.



Bramha (Niche Figure), Top of the Niche
a devotee holding a Linga, Arinjigaieswaram,
Melpadi.



Dvarapala, Arinjigaieswaram, Melpadi.

Mahadevarkku*..** Here the 'arrur thunjina devar***' is to be identified with Arinjigai, and this Arrur is different from Tondaiman Arrur where Aditya-I is said to have died and where his devoted son Paranthaka-I built a similar memorial sepulchral temple over the mortal remains of Aditya-I.

The shrine is built of dark greenish stone. This is well executed than the Somanatha temple at this place, probably by a better craftsman. Actually the Somanatha temple belonged to the previous reign. It was reconstructed or repaired by Rājarajā -I. The Cholisvara or Arinjigaiesvara temple is a very compact unit with a '***garbhagriha***' and an '***artha mandapa***' over the former of which rises the superstructure ending in '***vritta grieva sikara***' and is of an '***eka tala***' variety. The vimana wall has '***devakoshtha***' on the south, west and north, The '***devakoshtha***' on the south wall contains a fine sculpture of seated Dakshinamurti while the niches on the west and north walls having a standing image of Vishnu and Bramha respectively.

Inside the garbhagriha, is a circular linga, on a padmapitha. The iconographical details of the sculptures found in this temple are of interest. The image of Dakshinamurthi on the southern niche is shown seated under a tree. Below his feet is an apasmara, on either side of whom are shown a recumbent deer and a bull. He holds an '***akshamala***' in the upper right arm and Agni in his upper left while the two lower arms are damaged. His disciples are shown seated on either side of the apasmara.

The arch over the Dakshinamurthi image contains a relief of Śiva as Bikshadanamurthi with a '***bhuta***' carrying the alms bowl on his head. This gana is shown walking behind the standing figure with an antelope in between. In front of Śiva are two '***rishi-patnis***', one of them is shown placing the alms into the bowl held by Śiva. Her drapery is slipping down. The western wall has a standing figure of Vishnu in its niche. This fully cut-out image is four-armed, the arms of which are shown projected out of the body. The image of Bramha on the northern '***devakoshtha***' is a standing figure. Inside the arch shown above this niche is the relief of a devotee worshipping a linga. He is shown with his hands held in '***anjali mudra***'. Also the objects of worship are depicted. Some scholars opined that the figure may be identified with '***Markandeya***'. But this can also be identified with the deceased king on whose mortal remains the temple was raised. Almost, in all the memorial '***Śivalayas***' the depiction of a human worshipping the linga is found.

The inscriptions says that the maintenance of this memorial temple was in the hands of the Lakulisa panditha of the pāsupathā sect, during

Rajendra-I's reign, who was very much attached to the saiva religion, especially to the pāsupathā sect. This can be verified with his other epigraphical records. During his reign, all the memorial temples which were existing at that time were administered by the Lakulísa pandithas of pāsupathā sect.

In the work, '*Temples of the middle Chola period*' of S.R.Balasubramaniyam, it is stated that the Cholas of the middle and later periods seems to have been deeply interested in the Lakulísa cult. Even in the '*Big Temple*' in Thanjavur of Rājarajā-I's period in the inscriptions we find the name of Guru Isana panditha is often mentioned. It is also to be known that Śivacharya Isana Śiva Panditha continued to be the chief priest of the temple till the second regnal year of Rajendra-I, when he was succeeded by Śivacharya pavana pidaran. In turn, he was succeeded by Śivacharya sarva Śiva panditha. The names itself makes clear that they were the pāsupathā sect Śivacharyas.

TEMPLES DEDICATED TO SUNDARA CHOLA

During the Chola reign in south India there was the practice of raising temples in honour of their ancestors by dedicating the temples to them. The Olagapuram village in villupuram district, Tamilnadu state derives its name from that of one of the queens of Rājarajā-I , Logamahadevi who bore the alternate name of Danti Sakti vitanki. During the Chola days it bore the name of Olagapuram. An inscription dated in the third regnal year of Rajamahendra gives information about the existence in this village of a Jaina temple called sundara solapperumpalli, named evidently after sundara Chola and setup by Rājarajā I in memory of his father. Sundara Chola is said to have died in the Golden palace(pon maligai) at Kancheepuram, Tamilnadu state. Hence he is described in later times as "pon maligai Tunjina dever." His queen was Vanavan madevi who is a very Arundathi, the very embodiment of chastity; and she is said to have followed her lord as night the day to heaven afraid, as it were, of the allurements of her husband by the celestial nymphs and consequently desirous of being near him even there. This seems to be an euphemistic way of saying that she committed sati(self immolation).Her devoted daughter Kundavaiyar set up a metal image of her mother in the Rajarajeswaram temple at Thanjavur, built by Rājarajā-I. the inspiration of Logamahadevi, the chief queen of Rājarajā I were built at Ulogamadevipuram , a Śiva temple called Arikulakesari isvaram and a Vishnu temple named Arinjigai vinnagar both named after the names of Rājarajā I 's grand father Arinjaya Chola and a Jain temple called after his father. A fragmentary copper plate grant of the reign of

Sundara Chola is published by T.N.Subramaniyan in the Transactions of the Archaeological Society of South India. This grant registers a gift of land as pallichandam in favour of the Sundara Solapperumpalli a jaina temple named after the king by a merchant Selethi Kudiyan for the use of the male and female ascetics of the institution.

The jaina temple and the Vishnu temple dedicated to the Chola ruler Sundara Chola proved that there was religious tolerance in the Chola territory . But these temples mentioned above are not built on the mortal remains of the deceased king, but dedicated to the memory of him.

TEMPLE DEDICATED TO THE ANCESTERS FOR 21GENERATIONS

It is peculiar that a temple was built for the salvation of the deceased father and the ancestors of twenty one generations during Chola reign, in the Karnātakā region.

Chikkali is a small village in Gundalpet taluk of Mysore district of Karnātakā state. Set among the cultivated fields of the village is a ruined Śiva temple, now called as '***Mahadevar Temple*** 'which came into existence during the Chola hegemony over the Karnātakā region. According to an inscription dated in the thirty third regnal year of Rajadhiraja-I(AD1051) one Kesava Bhatta, son of Achayya of Tore Kaaratti built a temple for the merit and salvation of ancestors for twenty one generations and made a grant of 100 bhtlas of land, west of the temple garden and also gave away to the temple six cows to provide for a perpetual lamp to the god Mahadeva and the pallikonde god.9E.C.My.GN.93).

The custom of performing rituals to the ancestors for many foregone generations is still in practice with the Hindu people. But this is peculiar that a temple itself was built for the ancestors and the salvation of their souls. It shows the religious faith of the person who built it and the affection of him on his father as well as the ancestors.

MEMORIAL TEMPLES FOR CHEIFTAINS

MEMORIAL TEMPLES FOR CHIEFTAINS

Erection of memorial temples not only for the kings but also for the chieftains who fought on behalf of their kings was popular during the Chola reign in south India. This is evidently proved by the inscriptions and also by one surviving temple at the village of Kalidindi, Kaibalur taluk, Krishna district in Andra Pradesh the village of kalidindi which continues to bear its ancient name is situated on the eastern fringe of the colair (kollera) lake in the kaikalur taluk of Krishna district in Āndhra Pradesh and is not more than 80 kms (50 miles) from Vijyawada on Krishna.

Three temples were built in this village in memory of three famous Chola generals sent by the Chola emperor Rajendra I to the assistance of the vengi ruler and viceroy to defend the province from the intrusions of the western Chālukyās. A fund of information about these temples and the circumstances under which they came to be built is furnished by the kalidindi grant of the eastern Chalukyan ruler Rājarajā I (Saka 944 –AD 1022) son of Vimaladitya whose marriage with Kundavai, the sister of Rajendra I is mentioned in the plates

The circumstances under which these generals fought and died are not clearly brought out in the plates from a western Chalukaya reward at Hottar in the old Mysore region of Karnātakā state dated saka 929 (A.D. 107) we get the name of a dandanayaka of the western Chalukya king Jayasimha II named chavanarasa who bore the title of "the destroyer of the pride of the fort of Bijavadi". This Bijavadi may reasonably identified with the present Vijayawada of Āndhra Pradesh, and the battle mentioned in the Kalidindi plates might have taken place during the western Chālukyān expedition under chavanarasa. We may presume with same reason that the battle was fought in or near kalidindi itself and that the memorial temples were built near were the generals fought and fell.

From the plates we come to know that " the general Rājarajā Brahma – maharaja rose to eminence by the grace of king Rajendra Chola madhurantaka and guarded his kingdom like a serpent protecting hidden treasure no sooner did he receive the orders of his sovereign , than he marched into the Āndhra country at the head of a vast army accompanied by two other generals Uttama Chola chodakon and Uttma chola miadendaiyan. The three Tamil generals who were like the tree (Vedic) fires bent upon the destruction of the forest which was the Karnātakā army, became engaged in a fierce battle between the two arrives is described viscidly in the plates. The engagement, however seems to have

been indecisive or at any rate did not result in a victory for the Chola forces: for it is said that the commanders of both the sides perished with the forces.

It is in this circumstance that the eastern Chālukyān Rājarāja I setup in memory of Rājarāja brahma maharaja a temple dedicated to Śiva called Rajarajesvaram in the village of kalidindi. Two other Śiva temples were also built, in memory of Uttama Chola cholker and Uttama Chola miladudaiyan. The relevant person of the record as follows :-

Kalidindi grame rajrajesvarm itit Śivaryatanam akaravam. Uttama solach chodagen iti Uttama choda milad udiyan iti prasiddha vanyam api chodisya Śivayatana – dvayam (karami)".

Not much is known of these generals who were killed in the battle one of them, Uttama Chola miladedaian figures as the ruler of the area now falling under the south Arcot district of Tamilnadu as gleaned from a record of the fourth year of rajendra I where he is spoken of as the yadava bhima of the bhargava gotra but nothing more is known about him the other little is known.

The provocation for the kalindindi grant was the need to provide for the conduct of worship and services and the celebration of festivals in these memorial temples.

Of the three temples only one the Rajarajesvaram, survives even the in a dilapidated condition. It is in the vicinity of the village of the kalidindi and consists of a mere cella in later with granite stone facing of the ardhamandapa only the plinth in granite remains . a nandi and a dvajastambha are in front of the shrine. A second temple is about three kms in a westerly direction. Set amidst fields and has been rebuilt out of recognition in recent times. The third temple was not traceable.

KANDALISVARA TEMPLE

Four miles (6.5 kms) to the north of Walajabad on the Walajabad Sriperumbudur road and about 22 ½ kms (14 miles) from Kanchipuram via Walajabad, is the small village of Tenneri, of ancient origin describing its name from the huge lake on whose bund it is situated said to have been excavated by the sangam ruler Tiraiyan. Tiraiyan eri' in course of time has became Tenneri. The Kandalisvara temple is about 200 meters off the village. There are five inscriptions on its adhisthanam four of them relating to the period of Rājarajā- I and the remaining one to that

of Vira Rajendra (ARE 198 TO 202 OF 1901). The earliest is found on the south wall of the temple and belongs to the eleventh year of Rjaraja-I. It mentions the name of Madhurantaka devar alias UttamaChola devar and a number of ritual vessels in copper for offerings and various services in the central shrine of the Uttamasolivaram temple. The relevant portion of the inscription reads as follow:- " ....***korājarājakesan panmarkku yandu...Avadu urrukkattukkottattut – tan-kunatt sri Uttama cholisvarattu alvar Gandaradita devar pirattiyar Uttama Cholanai tiru vasyirril vaitta amliya pirantakan madeviyar Sembiyan madeviyar and udaiya pirattiyar. Umukkatukkottahut-tan – kurrattu Uttama Chola chatunvedi mangalathu ...***_ "

From these we get to know that this temple should have come into existence in or before the tenth regnal year of Rājarajā- I and must have been dedicated to the memory of Uttama Chola and the place also was christened Uttama Chola chaturveimangalm. The temple faces east: it consists of a garbhagriha (5.09 ms by 5.77 ms) . the garbhagirha stands on an adhisthana measuring 80 cms in height . the super structure of srivimana is of brick and chunam on the three walls of the garbhagirha there are excellent sculptures of dakshinamurthi in the south, Vishnu in the west and brahma in the north. The garbhagriha has a lingam measuring 1.40ms in height . There are two majestic dvarapalas kept on the ground at the flanks of the entrance to the ardha mandapa ; the ardha mandapa has three niches on each side (north and south) though only one houses a sculpture of durga.

MEMORIAL TEMPLES OF THE PANDYAS

MEMORIAL TEMPLES OF PANDYAS

There were three famous dynasties in addition to the Pallavas ruled South India especially the Tamil Country viz. Chera, Chola and Pandyas. Pandyas were equally illustrious to the Cholas. They fought many wars with the Cholas and the other rulers and proved themselves in many of the wars. They were competent in the temple construction activities also. They were staunch saivist and saivism was raised to the peek during their reign. Their capital Madurai is famous for the magnificent Meenakshi-Sundaresvarar temple. The practice of erecting 'sivalayas' on the mortal remains of the deceased was in vogue during the Pandya period. Though we could not trace many in number the available edifice itself is enough to prove the purpose.

PALLIPADAI SUNDARA PANDISVARAM

In the Ramanathapuram district of Tamilnadu state, a small village called as Pallimadam. In this village there is an intact temple of the Pandya period which is known in the inscriptions as '***Pallipadai Sundara pandisvaram***'. We find many inscriptions of the Pandya king Vira Pandya. The Śivakasi copper plates of the same king declares that there was an elder brother for him with the name '***Sundara pandyan***' This copper belongs to the period A.D.941. The copper plate praises that Sundara Pandya patronized many learned persons. This may be taken that he could have patronised the Śiva gurus and obtained '***diksha***'. The memorial temple was raised by his brother who succeeded him. Linga was consecrated in this temple.

As per the Āgamās, there was a memorial temple raised for the saiva devotee Sundara Pandya in this place, by his brother Vira Pandya. And also the other rules insisted by the Āgamās as well as in the Thirumandiram, about the worship and entertainment, arrangements were made. Thirumandram says that the deceased saiva devotee must be treated as Śiva himself. All the respects and offerings worship etc rendered to lord Śiva, must be given to the departed soul too. And also the songs and dance also to be allowed as an entertainment to the deity.

We see an inscription regarding this. It states that the '***devaradiyal***' the unmarried females well versed in song and dance who were dedicated to god were appointed to this temple. So it is understood that they were presenting the entertainment in the temple and doing service to the temple. This temple takes the credit of having the information of the appointment of the '***devaradiyal***' in the pallipadai temple.

Vimana – General View - Pallipadai Sundarapandeeswaram, Pallimadam.

Subshrine, Pallipadai Sundarapandeeswaram, Pallimadam

MEMORIAL TEMPLES IN THE INSCRIPTIONS

MEMORIAL TEMPLES IN THE INSCRIPTIONS

We have lots and lots of epigraphical records which confirms the erection of memorial temples in the historical period. Most of these temples were modified by the later rulers, or buried under the construction of new temples . But the physical non-availability of these edifices could not deny their existence in past. Sincere and continuous effort of the archaeologists may bring out the buried temples in future.

Here we are going to discuss about some of the south Indian inscriptions which denotes the informations of the sepulchral temples.

TEMPLE BUILT BY THE GANGĀ CHIEFTAIN RAJADITYĀ

There was one inscription documented in a village, Solapuram near Vellore in North Arcot district of Tamil nadu state which mentions about a memorial temple.

The inscription (no 429 of 1902) engraved on a long stone, broken in three pieces, in a tope opposite the ruined Isvara temple at Solapuram, a village 15 km. South of Vellore, North Arcot district, revealed that a Gangā chief named Rajadityā built a temple of Śiva and a tomb in memory of his deceased father Prithvigangāraiyar. The record is dated in the eighth regnal year of king Vijayakampa varma (circa 925). The relevant text reads;

Line – 4 ***n tam appanar (ai) ppalli***
Paduttar idattu isvara-alayamum
Atita-garamum edu (p) pittu kandu
Sevviytan

"caused to be made a temple of Isvara and a house for the deceased i.e.,. A tomb on the spot where his father had been buried.". It appears that the main temple housed a Śiva-linga and the secondary shrine (atitagriha) was a tomb which perhaps contained the memorial sculpture of the dead king. Both these are not traceable now, perhaps buried under the enlarged Nandikesvara temple, visibly a Chola edifice of the times of Rājarāja and Rajendra.

Now we do not find the so called Śiva temple or the memorial tomb here which could have been buried in the enlarged '***Nandikeswara Temple***' of the Chola period. But it is clear that the memorial was raised according to the Āgamās, which stress that the samadhi of a dead saiva devotee must be near a Śiva temple. The place must have been the death place of the deceased and there might not be a Śiva temple existed nearby. Out of great

affection to his father and more care about the salvation of his soul the son might have constructed a Śiva temple first and then the memorial tomb nearby. This can be compared with the memorial temple at Melpadi, which was constructed near the existing Śiva temple in ruin. It is noteworthy that the ruined temple was rebuilt by Rājarajā in stone when he constructed the memorial near that temple.

MEMORIAL TEMPLE OF RĀJARAJĀ-I

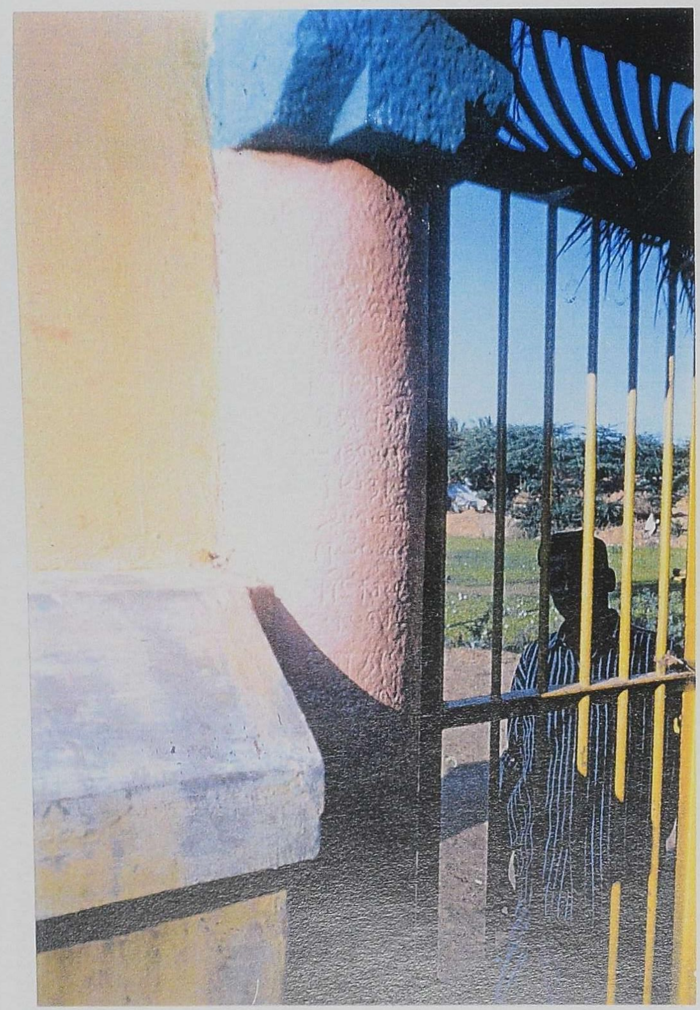
Rājarāja-I, ruled the Chola territory from A.D.985 to 1014. He was a staunch saivist and patronized the pāsupathā sect of saivism. He constructed the famous Big temple at Thanjavur. He was succeeded after his demise, by his son Rajendra-I, who was also equally interested in the pāsupathā saivism. We get an inscription from the Kailasa natha temple at a place called Udaiyalur which identify the deity of the Śiva temple as '***Sri Śivapatha sekara mangalathu Sri Kailayamudaiyar Sri Śivapatha sekara esvaramudaiya mahadevar***' We have already seen that '***Śivapathasekaran***' was the diksha name of Rājarajā-I and the temple could have been erected in the memory of him. And also the town was called as Mahesvara thanam, which was full of pāsupathā sect followers. It is to be remembered here that the pāsupathās were maintaining all the memorial temples during the Chola reign Another inscription of Sundara Pandya, the Pandya ruler states that there was pāsupathā matt called '***Abhimuktham***' and it was maintained by Vidya Śiva panditha, who was a pāsupathā saivist. Abhimuktham denotes the sacred town, Kasi, which is a burial city.

Another inscription found in the '***Paal kulathu Amman***' temple of the same place, gives important information. This inscription belongs to Kulothunga-I, and the date of this is A.D.1112. Previously this inscribed pillar was in the Vishnu temple of the same place and later on during renovation work transferred to the present place. The inscription as follows:-

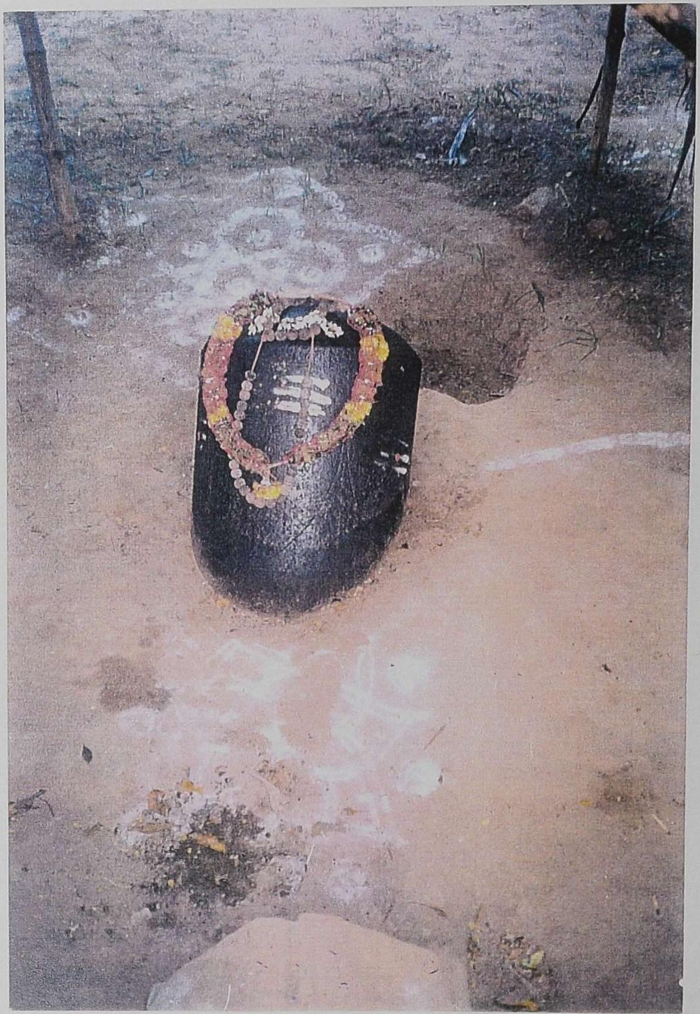
'***Svastic sahalabuvana chakravarthikal Sri Kulothunga Chola devarkku yandu norpathirandavadhu Sri Śivapatha mangalathu ezhuntharuli ninra Sri Rājarajā devarana Sri Śivapatha sekara devar thirumalikai munbil periya thirumana mandapam***............'

It goes on like this. The main information is that there was a palace for Rājarajā-I, in this place. Rājarajā was residing in that.

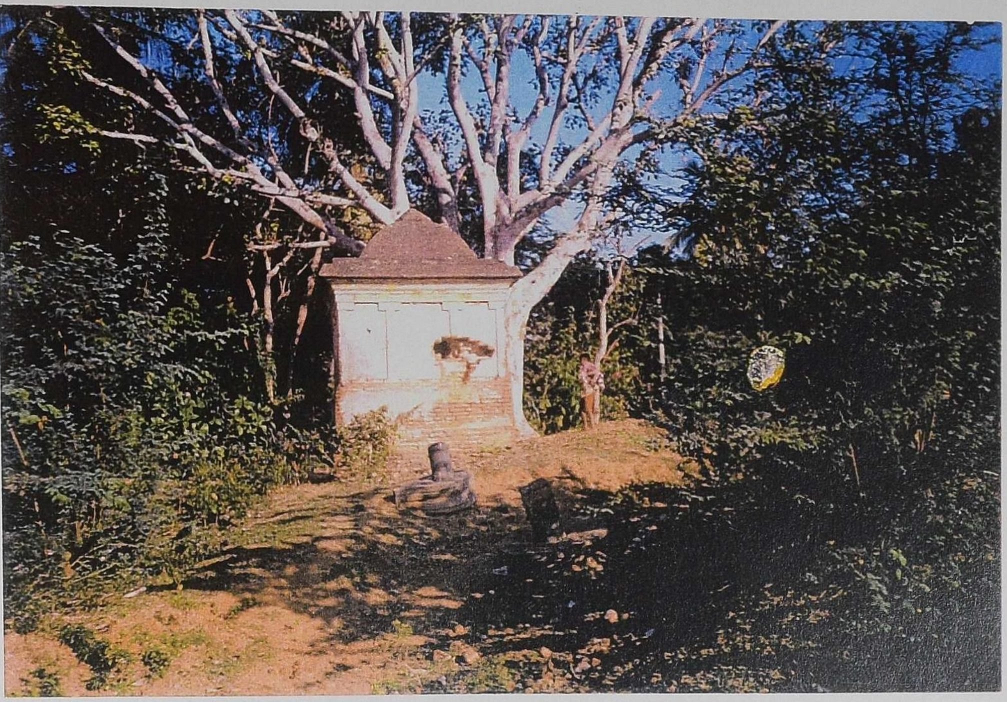
Here we have to refer the date. Rājarāja-I was died in the year 1014 A.D. After 98 years how he could come or reside in the palace. This is possible only by erecting an image of the deceased king and trusting it a



Inscribed Pillar, Pālkulathu Amman Temple, Udaiyalur.



Linga found at the so-called burial place of Rājarāja – I, Udaiyalur.



An abandoned empty shrine on the riverbed with two Sivalingas nearby, Udaiyalur.

Loose Sculptures, Pālkulathu Amman Temple, Udaiyalur.

representation. The pāsupathā sect preached that the deceased soul will enter into the linga .It can be concluded with these informations that there might have been a memorial temple erected for Ṛājarajā-I and his sculptural portrait could have been installed and worshipped. (This kind of linga or images of the deceased worship was found in the inscription of Chandra gupta Vikramaditya of 400 A.D)

At the north of this village , in an agricultural land there lies a big Śivalinga, half buried in the earth. This might have been the place where Rājarajā's memorial temple once existed.

Rājarajā I was succeeded by his only son Rajendra I, born of his queen Vanavan mahadevi. Rajendra I , seems to have died in his thirty second regnal year corresponding the 26th regnal year of Rajadiraja I (A.D 1044) who had a long joint rule of 26 years with his father. There is an inscription at Brahmadesam north arcot district dated in the 26th year and 120th day of Rajadhiraja I , where it is stated that the local assembly met under a tamarind tree and sold land for a water shed for " quenching the thirst " of the king Sri Udaiyar Rajendra Chola deva and his queen Vira mahadeviyar who is said to have " entered the supreme feet of brahma in the very same temple in which the body of Rajendra Chola deva was interned ". This gift was made by senapati Madhurantakan alias parakesari velar, the brother of the queen. Thus we learn that the illustrious Rajendra , the conqueror of Gangāi and Kadaram died at Bramadesam in A.D. 1044 and his queen Viramadevi committed sati and the gift for a water shed was in honour and for the spiritual propitiation of the illustrious royal couple.

The main deity in the Siva temple of this village is called as Bramhapurisvarar. The inscription stating that the royal couple attained the feet of Bramha must have been a corruption of the word, ' Paraman' which means Siva. Because in Tamil the word 'Pirama' means Bramha. So there is a chance of mistaking Bramha for Siva in this case.

TEMPLES DOUBTED AS MEMORIAL TEMPLES

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Ponnamaravti is an important town in the Pudukkottai District. There are two temples in this town. The Cholisvarar Temple of later Chola Period and Sundara Raja Temple of later Pandya period.

The Editor of the Pudukkottai State Gazetteer has contended that the temple of Cholisvaram could appear to have been built by Rājarajā II in memory of his great grandfather Kulothunga I, who was earlier known as Rajendra Chola II. Dr.S.R.Balasubramaniyam says in his later chola temples that this scams rather farfetched though. It is not impossible because in spite of the apparent gap of generations of Rājarajā II.

There are four chola records have two belonging to the time of Kulottunga III and two others (ARE 4 & 9 of 1909) to the time of Tribhuvana Chakravartin Rājarajādeva. The chola records refer to the building of the Srivimana and the consecration of a Śiva Linga named Rajendra Solisvaram Udaiya Mahadevar by the local chief Rajendra Solan Keralan alias Nishdarajan.

In the 12th year of Tribhuvanachakravartin Kulottunga Deva presumably III, there is a gift jointly made by the Nishadarajan and by the temple architect Adi Acharyan.

From an undated inscritpion (ARE 13 of 1909), we find that the steps and verandah around the shrine were built by one Nilaimai Alagiyan. A gift of land was made to the Matha built within the temple.

The Bhairavar temple - In a village called Solapuram near Kumbakonam there are three temples in this place :

1. Kasi Visvanathar Temple
2. Kailasanathar Temple
3. Bhairavar Śiva Temple

Among the three temples, the so called Bhairavar temple has resemblence of the characteristics of a few temples of the chola period.

In the Panchavan Madesvesvaram at Pattisvaram which is defintely a Pallipdai temple where the ardhamandapa images are Bhikshatanar and Ganapati (in the south), and Ardhanari (in the north). There are no sculptures in the recesses between the ardhamandapa and the garbhagriha.

A similar disposition of niche scultputes is found in the Esvara temple which is called Kulothunga Solisvaram at Chintamaniagaram near Villupuram. They are Bhikshatanar, Ganapati and Urdhavatandava murti (In the south, east and west) and Alinganamurti, Durga and Bhairavar in the north (both sets on the ardhamandapa walls). A third temple following in this group is one at Manambadi.

KAILASAM UDAIYAR TEMPLE

The village of Manambadi, which is in Tanjavur district, lies at a distance of 10 km north of Kumbakonam. The temple at Manambadi is now known as the Naganathasvamin temple. But in ancient days it bore the name of Kailsam Udaiyar temple. The temple is a very important temple of the middle Chola period, attributable to the reign of Rajendara – I. It is one of a very few temples of this period having a unique group of devakostha figures. In this respect it resembles the temple of Panchavan Madeviesvaram at Pattesvaram built by Rajendra I in memory and perhaps over the mortal remains of Panchavan Mahadevi, his stepmother and one of the more famous queens of Rājarajā I.

The various inscriptions in this temple informs about the arrangements for perpetual lamps, enacting 'Tamilakkuttu' and the yearly festival. And also for the feeding of the apurva mahesvaras, the saiva pilgrims.

Another inscription (ARE 94 of 1931-32) states that provision was also made for the performance of a dance recital and feeding the devotees in the 'Bhaktaral Bhakthi Matham.'

S.R.Balasubramaniyam opines that a near identiacal realtionship to the Panchavan Madevi Isvaram. We have all other identities of a Pallipadai temple, like the arrangements for food offering, dance recital, perpetual lamp etc. But no inscritpional evidence to say particularly that it is a Pallipadai temple.

KULOTHUNGA SOLISVARAM

We come across many Śiva temples of the Chola reign named after the rulers. For example Vikrama Solisvaram, Uttama Solisvaram, Raja Rajesvaram etc. The practice of erecting Śiva temple in the name of the rulers by others or by the rulers themselves in their lifetime itself was in vogue during the Chola reign in South India. So until and unless we have a specific inscriptional evidence, it is very difficult to conclude a temple

whether it is erected as a Pallipadai temple on the mortal remains or raised in honour of the ruler. But at times with the sculptural depiction we can assume the fact.

In that case, we can analyse the Kulottunga Solisavaram (At present-Vaidyanathisvarar temple) at Chithamani Agaram in the Villupuram district. Chintamani Agaram, is a small village about 12 km from Villupuram. There is a compact temple in this village locally known as Vaidisvarar Koil or merely Esvarar temple.

The village was known in ancient times by the name of Dina Chintamani Nallur, evidently named after a queen of Kulotunga I. Kulotunga I, as Rajendra II of Vengi, had married Madhurantaki, a daughter of Rajendra Deva II of the Chola dynasty. She is generally referred to as Bhuvan Mulududaiyal or Avani Mulududaiyal, (The mistress of the world) and she also bore the surname of Dina-Çhintamani. She seems to have been the chief queen during the first thirty years of Kulottunga I's rule. The village was named after her as Dina Chitamani Nallur, as mentioned in the inscription

The main deity of the temple was known in ancient days as Kulotunga Cholisvaram Udaiya Mahadevara.

From the inscriptions, we learn that the temple was built before the sixth year of Vikrama Chola and was named after Kulothunga I.

The temple faces east and the square sanctum and ekatala vimana which are the identification for a Pallipadai Śivalaya. The main feature of the temple is the set of sculptures found in the niches of the garbhagriha. The disposition of the devakoshta images, resembles the Panchavan Madesviesvaram which is a Pallipadai temple, as the Kailsam Udaiyar temple in Manambadi. In all the three temples we find the Urdhava Tandavamurti and Bhairava as deva kostha images which is a unique feature not found in any other Chola temples.

ĀGAMĀS IN THE TRADITION OF SEPULCHRAL TEMPLES

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Āgamās played an important role in the tradition of erecting sepulchral temples in South India. They diverted the tradition in a systematic method by insisting some specific rituals and conditions in constructing the memorial temples and consecrating lingas in them. They also stressed the food offerings, chanting of devaram hymns and celebrating festivals regularly in the memorials. The saiva Āgamās strictly says the burial of the deceased saiva devotee, after death; it further states that if the dead body of the saivist is cremated instead of burying, then there will happen disasters in the land where the sin is committed. It is evident in the case of the death of the Maharaja of Thanjavur during the British rule in India. It is mentioned in a letter written by the '***guru***' of the saiva matt of that period to the Diwaan of the Thanjavur palace. It is stated in that letter that the cremation of the body of the Maharaja after his death was a blunder. Though it was stressed by the religious people that the saiva king should be buried according to the Āgamās, not to be cremated; it is like cremating Śiva himself. It will create many problems in the country. The reply was admitting the fault, and quoted the compulsion of the British to cremate made them to do so and requested the ceremonies for rectifying the sin.

So it is understood that the Āgamās were the soul of saiva religion. It is the rule code for the saivists. They contain the rules for each and every action of the human life, from birth to death. Their impact on the saivists is great. There are separate Āgamās for the after death ceremonies and the duties of the heirs to make the departed soul's salvation. So the tradition of the sepulchral temples in South India in the historical period is totally depended on the agamic rules. Let us refer some of the relevant Āgamās for the purpose of studying the memorial temples of south India.

The term '***Āgamā***' generally implies a traditional doctrine or precept, a sacred writing or scripture and hence the Vedas. But there is a special class of works inculcating the mystical worship of Śiva and sakti like the tantras: they belong to south India and are known as the Āgamās. They are encyclopedic works like puranas, whose ultimate object is also to discuss the worship of the triad. The puranas, How ever deal with all the three deities forming the holy trinity, although Vishnu has received preference and to his worship fourteen of the puranas are devoted. The Āgamās, on the other hand, deal mostly with Śiva. Obviously they are intended to represent the puranas of south India. These Āgamās of dakshinataya are in fact more extensive than the puranas of aryavarta. There are as many as twenty eight

recognized Agamās. While the number of the great puranas is not more than eighteen or nineteen.

The Āgamās, like the puranas, incidentally deal with architectural subjects; their contributions to the silpa-sastra are however, more extensive and valuable. Some of the Āgamās deal with very technical matters, which are not met with in the puranas. More over some Āgamās to all intents and purposes are but architectural treatises. The kāmikāgamā, for instance, devotes sixty chapters out of a total of seventy-five to architecture and sculpture, and its treatments of the subjects can be hardly be surpassed by that of an avowedly architectural treatise. Just like a silpa sastra it begins systematically with the preliminary matters, such as the testing and preparation of soil, selection of sites, scheme of measurement and the finding out of the cardinal points by means of gnomons for the orientation of buildings, and the ground plans. Buildings proper are described under twenty type, just as in the matsya and bhavishya puranas, as well as the brihat samhita. But, unlike the puranas, there is in the kāmikāgamā a discussion of architectural matters under some very highly technical classification, such as the styles, nagara, dravida and vesara; shapes, masculine feminine and beuter; suddha, misra and samkirna depending respectively on a single material mixture of two materials, and the amalgamation of many materials; samchita, asamchita and apasamchita otherwise known as sthanaka, asana and sayana, which, in case of temples, depend on the erect, sitting and reclining posture of the image.

There are Āgamās which deals with the death ceremonies and rituals to be practiced by the saivists. One among them is '***Rauravāgamā***'. The Rauravāgamā deals with '***Kshetra linga prathista***'. It deals with the consecration of the lingas in the sepulchral monuments of the saivists. It says that to relieve the souls of the deceased savistic persons a linga must be consecrated on the '***samadhi***' which has to be made according to the rules mentioned, in the burial site itself. The Āgamās says that the dead body of a pure saivist must not be cremated, since it was believed that Śiva himself resides in the body. So samadhi must be made for that purpose. It explains the procedure of burying the dead body of the saivist.

In some other texts it is stated as '***samadhi linga sthapana***'. It strictly says that the samadhi linga prathista must be made to a person who is a staunch follower of any one of the four sects of the saivism and must have had the '***Dhiksha***' from the saiva guru, during his lifetime Linga puranam, clearly explains the procedure of getting '***Śiva diksha***', in an elaborate manner. The person who is getting Śivadiksha must approach a '***guru***' who is well versed in the vedic mantras. It was strictly followed in those days. The

person who decided to get '*Śiva diksha*' chanted the '*Aghora mantram*', '*Vama mantram*', and '*Esana mantram*' and worshiped lord Śiva. It was the very important ceremony of the procedure. He had chanted the mantra 108 or 1008 times. Boiled rice, ghee, sacred grass, panchagavyam(five things got from the cow), the sacred ash, etc were poured into '*homa*' i.e. agni.(sacred fire). Five golden pots were filled with gold and other precious stones, covered with pure cloth and thread was rolled on the pots, and kept in the place where the rituals took place. The ceremony continued for two days. First day, the chanting of the mantras, performing the '*yaga*' were took place. The second day the person who is involved in the ceremony was made to chant the sacred names of lord Śiva and blessed with the '*Diksha*'. During the first day night, he was made to lay down on the grass bed. During the second day ceremony, he was made to sit on the grass, facing south. His eyes were covered with pure silk cloth and he was taken near the Śivalinga. After that he used to worship the lord Śiva with flowers made of gold or silver with the natural flowers according to his status. He used to chant the Aghora mantra, Esana mantra and Pranava manta so many times when he submits the flower on the Śivalinga. At last his eyes will be relieved from the tied cloth and the ceremony is completed with that It is must that after death, his body must be buried with due respect and a linga must be consecrated on his burial mound. The respect given to him or his dead body is given to lord Śiva himself.

In the '*Makutāgamā*', in the '*caryapada*' portion, it is clearly explained about the rituals to be followed after the death of a saivist. In chapter-4, it is told that the '*samadhi*' of a wise person to be located either near the temples of Śiva, in the garden adjacent to it, near the pilgrimage of Śiva, beneath the bilva tree or on the bank of a river. The shape of the samadhi should be square; length and breath should be equal to five steps and depth of nine walking steps. A triangular hole of the size of three walking steps should be dug within and towards the south corner of the '*samadhi*'. A small dias or platform of the size of the three walking steps both in length and breath should be made within the triangular hole. Then the '*samdhi*' should be anointed with the cow-dung reciting the hymn "*ma vo rishat*". The place should be sanctified uttering the original five syllable hymn (panchakshara) along with the six syllable hymn. In the midst of the various musical sounds of '*tooriya*' etc. and showering the flowers reciting the hymn,'*cittih, prthivyagnih*', the body of the deceased devotee should be placed in a sitting position of '*svastikasan*' facing towards the north and pray to god, '*O Sambhu, kindly accept the offering*'.

Then in chapter-5, the linga pradhistai on the samadhi is explained. It says that the son, with the view to achieving the divine state of his father,

should fulfill the rituals of shaving, bathing , besmearing the sacred ashes, wearing the garland of '*Rudraksha*' and take the permission of 'ganas' to install the linga on the Samadhi, duly scribed on it the name of the father and decorated with five or nine bulls. Then he should respectfully donate ten items, such as cow etc. and worship the linga along with the bull kept on the samadhi. To quench the heat produced because of putting the earth on it during the rite of samadhi, he should satiate the '*Istalinga*' by bathing it with the milk. He should offer the handful of water three times for the welfare of his father and should never offer water squeezing the clothes.

The linga kept on the samadhi should not be removed for ten days. After ten days, the linga installed on the samadhi is to be wrapped in a cloth along with the bull and to be taken to the pilgrimage and immersed in the water with restrained mind. After immersing the linga in the water, he should take bath with the water mixed with sesamum and phyllanthus emblica etc. But in this Āgamā it is told that the linga installed on the samadhi should be removed after ten days .It is not mentioned about the construction of any temple on the burial sites.

The practice is still in vogue among the death ceremonies of the brahmins whether they are saivists are vaishnavists. The vaishnavists does not say the stone placed on the burial as a linga, but the stone is believed to be the dead person and to salvate the soul departed, the stone is drowned in sacred water after ten days.

In the way by which the persons got the '*Śiva diksha*' were given a (new) '*diksha*' name. When there were memorial shrines erected for the kings who got '*diksha*', the '*diksha names*' were mentioned in them. For example let us see a few memorial temples:-

The Chola king Aditya was mentioned as Vahisa panditha in the inscriptions of his memorial shrine at Thondaimanad.

The pallava kings Paramesvara varman-I, and Rajasimha were mentioned that they were crowned with '*Śivalinga*', in the inscriptions at Kailasa natha temple, Kancheepuram, which indicates that they have got Śiva diksha.

The famous Chola ruler Rājarajā-I. declared his name as '*Śiva patha sekaran*' in the inscription at the '*Big Temple* ' at Thanjavur, a long time after his accession, i.e. during his 24th regnal year. And also one saiva guru called as Sarva Śiva panditha was announced as '*Raja Guru*'. It gives us an idea that Rājarāja-I must have got diksha from this guru. Supporting the

view, the inscriptions indicate the rites of the '***diksha***' ceremony. We have already seen that there were golden pots placed for the '***diksha***' ceremony. There was a mention in the Thanjavur big temple inscriptions that the king gave golden pots to the temple. Not only that. he gave golden flowers also. When it is mentioned about the golden flowers, the information follows with the mention of the name, '***Śiva patha sekaran***'. All these informations encourage us to conclude that at the time of the consecration of the temple, Rājarāja-I, was given the '***Śiva diksha***'. More over it is mentioned in the Linga purana, guides us to get salvated from the worldly attachment, one has to worship the Śivalinga with single golden lotus or silver lotus or natural lotus flower. It is peculiar that Rājarāja gave so many gold and other costly thing to the temple in plenty but he gave only a single golden lotus flower, which indicates that he was very particular about the rules framed for the person who got '***Śiva diksha***'.

It is mentioned in the Āgamās that the devotee who wishes to obtain '***Śiva diksha***', must satisfy the guru by gifts and donations. It is proved by the inscriptions at Udaiyalur that a village called '***Mahesvarathanam***' and '***Śiva patha sekara mangalam***' was enriched by the Śiva devotees and mahavirathids. The village might have been issued as a '***dhanam***' to the mahesvaras or the pāsupathā saivists which could have been made the guru happy. In the same village the memorial temple for Rājarāja -I might have been present in past. We get epigraphical reference for this that there was a memorial like the prathima sala which had the image of Rājarāja-I, after his death.

The saiva sacred literature Thirumadiram in Tamil, elaborately explains by its verses. It is clearly expressed that how the dead body of the saiva devotee should be buried. It says the same rules which were already explained in the Makutāgamā, caryapatha. But here it is told that there must be a banyan tree planted or a linga must be installed. It is mentioned that the entrance must be east facing or north facing. It is told that in the body of a person who is given Śiva diksha, Śiva himself resides and cremating that body is putting fire to the Śiva temple itself. It will make Śiva to show angry on the people, which will cause destruction, since Śiva is the god of destruction. It further says that burying the dead body of the saiva devotee with due respect and erecting temples for them and worshipping them as we worship the lord Śiva himself, will give more blessings of Śiva.

So, all these references proves the role of Āgamās in the life and death of the saivists and the implementation of agamic rules by the rulers of south India.

CONCLUSION

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The tradition of sepulchral temples in south India which is the subject of the foregoing study is a complicated process. The ideas and assumptions that have been derived in the course of the investigation seem to indicate that the tradition originated from a long practice of burials, from the stone age. Whether the sepulchral temple associated with the dead person, derives its origin from the temple dedicated tot he god, or temple of gods or the civilised forms of the sepulchral monuments is the still undecided question.

When we shrink the area of study __ south India only, then we have to depend the facts of the original religion of the Dravidians. Originally it was the worship of ancestral spirits and village gods. It was considerably modified by the contact of the Dravidians with the Aryans. As a result of Aryan invasions of south India, the Dravidian religion was completely aryanised.

Then came the existence of the Āgamās. They were the combination of old traditions and new ideas. The old tradition of burials near the Śiva temple or construction of Śiva temples near or on the burial ground was modified with a new idea of erecting a separate memorial temple for the dead person in the name of Śiva. Memorial Śivalayas started to emerge. Then saivism influenced the society strongly, because of consisting traditional ideas. Which correlated with the belief of the people.

Papsupatha sect and Kalmukha sect of saivism were more popular for many centuries and they preached the doctrine of Śiva himself entering into the dead body. They insisted the persons to get Śiva diksha when they are alive to get salvated after death.

Civilization happened in the case of rituals also. Instead of abandoning the burials, people started worshipping the fear of the dead or evil sprit started fading of the dead or evil sprit started fading and the trust on the ancestors respect for their souls striked the minds of the people.

At present the practice of erecting memorials is fading away. Due to population the scarcity of place to live itself a main problem for the city people to live itself a main problem for the city people. Then how they can afford places to their dead ancestors. Progress in scientific inventions more shrinked the passions. For example the electric creation machine. Within no time, the body will be into ashes. The other reason, most of the people migrated from the villages to the cities for employment purpose. When the

leave village the shed the customs also there itself. Fashion killed the tradition.

It is convincing when the government take steps to protect the existing monuments and their heritage. But the co-operation of the mass is essential to protect the originality of the edifices.

I feel sorry to say that most of the sepulchral monuments are getting modernised and abandoned which leads to a destruction of the monuments. The awareness should be created and kindled by the government and the archaeologists.

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